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PARTNERSHIP WRITING : TEN-YEAR-OLDS TALKING AND WRITING TOGETHER

by

Catherine Lewis

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Catherine Lewis

(Student's signature)

Student's permanent address:
56 Manor Drive,
Sherwood Park, Alberta T8A OS4

Date: March 8/89

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Partnership Writing - Ten-Year-Olds Talking and Writing Together submitted by Catherine Lewis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

..J. Joyce Edwards..
Supervisor

.....

.....

Date: January 24, 1989

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late father, Ernest W. Walker, who continued to learn and ~~to~~ grow throughout his life. His honesty, personal work ethics and integrity are my reminders as I accept challenges in my studying and teaching.

ABSTRACT

This study focused on children's oral and written language in a cooperative, partnership situation. It's aim was to gain a better understanding of how children thought, talked and wrote when working cooperatively in a partnership.

The research utilized participant observation, type of ethnographic methodology known as. Two pairs of grade five students were observed for a twelve week period. Audiotaped oral language from all partnership writing sessions, observational fieldnotes and audiotaped formal and informal interviews provided data from which this particular perspective of cooperative writing emerged. The data from the above sources was then examined with reference to the research questions.

It was found that cooperative writing has benefits for developing writers in the upper elementary school. Students may be more aware of a sense of audience and motivation through writing with a partner than through writing alone. Through interaction, students were enabled to become more aware of their covert writing processes and were exposed to various writing styles.

The importance of talk, and in particular of expressive language, as a means of learning was evident in this study. Writing was also considered as a means of learning for these partnership students. Continual scaffolding was evident

where, through constant interaction, the students became teachers and learners interchangeably.

The students appeared to place a great deal of emphasis on the prewriting stage and to place little emphasis on the postwriting stage in their compositions. Partnership writing appeared to become one continual conference, where boundaries between stages of writing were not easily distinguishable. The students appeared to replicate many strategies which were a part of their classroom writing program.

It was found that cooperative writing may have drawbacks for some students, none of which appear to have been cited in recent research. Although the recognizably weaker writer may benefit from constant collaborative interaction, it is possible that cooperative writing may have a detrimental effect on the more able writer. Its continual use may inhibit the development of the more able writer, whose time may be better spent developing an individual writing style.

The recommendation was made that researchers and educators continue to exmine the writing process of elementary students, in particular of upper elementary students with reference to the role of peers, of teachers and of cooperative learning.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

> No one loves alone; no one heals alone; no one learns alone. Living is essentially a social process; learning is essentially a social process (Combs, 1976, p.76).

Children learn by constructing knowledge through modifying ideas and comparing them to those they have previously created for themselves. The construction of this knowledge from within is promoted by social interaction (Long & Bulgarella, 1985). These two Piagetian ideas which view children as active constructors of their own learning and which stress the effectiveness of social interaction in learning are key issues in the teaching of writing.

Educational research in the area of writing suggests that writing must be a meaningful, purposeful experience (Britton, 1970) as well as a means of learning (Halliday, 1973, 1982). By allowing students to write--together and cooperatively--learning is facilitated and is a combination of the active construction of knowledge and of social interaction.

In the past two decades, a great deal of insight into the process of writing has been gained through the work of educators such as Britton, Calkins, Emig, Graves, Murray, Perl, Smith and others. Through the work of Donald Murray

(1984) and Donald Graves (1983), guidelines have been set forth, which have attempted to identify the stages or phases of the writing process. Recent research also stresses the importance of oral language as it relates to the process of writing (Calkins, 1983,1986; Graves, 1983, 1985; Hansen, 1987; Martin, 1973). Cooperative, interactive learning, with social interaction as the key, has also been emphasized recently, following the research of James Britton (1970) and James Moffett (1983). Where talk may formerly have been viewed as unproductive, talking and writing are now seen as means of learning (Britton, 1970; Moffett, 1983; Barnes, Britton & Rosen, 1986).

Graves (1984) reports, "The following questions for research in the 80's are related to ... information needed to understand a child's writing process." (p.101) Although these are not the actual research questions of the present study many of them have a direct bearing on the study. Some of the questions which Graves suggests for further research and which apply to this study are:

1. What is the relationship between children's oral language and what they do during the writing process?

2. How does the child use language to discuss the writing process?

3. How do children change in making the transition

from oral to written discourse?

In a paired writing situation, which I am calling partnership writing, children were encouraged to create language through a process of social engagement and cooperation. They were encouraged to write with a partner throughout the entire writing process in order that observations could be made of how the students thought, talked and wrote, when in a collaborative situation.

Purpose of the Study

In combining two areas of research, those of the writing process and of cooperative learning, it was my intention to study cooperative writing. Cooperative learning as applied to writing may be an effective way to help students develop as writers in a supportive, nonthreatening and enjoyable atmosphere (Ede & Lunsford, 1985; Smith, 1982; Dickinson, 1986). Many students experience writing as a solitary act--as an individual and often difficult struggle to shape meaning through language. Although discussion and interaction may be a minimal part of many writing programs through brainstorming and sharing, the writing itself is usually done alone. The purpose of this study then was to have students work with a partner throughout all the stages in the process of writing, so that the effects of this partnership might be observed.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What special features distinguish partnership writing?
2. How do students negotiate the meaning and structural elements of writing through this partnership relationship?
3. How does the social context of the partnership affect the writing of the students involved?
4. What further information can be gained about the process of writing and about cooperative learning through the study of partnership writing?

Definition of Terms

Process Writing: The process of writing has been described in different ways: "as prewriting, writing and rewriting; as circling out and circling back; as collecting and connecting" (Calkins, 1986,p.17). Murray (1985) uses the terms rehearsal, drafting, revision and editing to describe the process of writing.

Cooperative Learning: Cooperative learning has been described as an instructional format consisting of

small, cooperative groups which work together to accomplish shared goals. In a cooperative learning situation students perceive that they are positively interdependent with other members of the learning group.

Conference: The term conference has been described as "a scheduled one-to-one discussion between a teacher and a student concerning some aspect of the child's involvement in the writing process" (Yeske, 1984, p.3). In this study the term conference is extended to also include a one-to-one discussion between two partners, as well as a group discussion among the four students involved in the study.

Partnership Writing: Partnership writing can be described as an educational situation where two students are paired throughout the entire process of writing to promote social and cognitive growth.

Brief Outline of the Study

Four students participated in this study. The four grade five students varied in ability levels and in their previous success with writing. They were perceived by their classroom teacher to be reasonably cooperative and able to verbalize their thoughts. The two pairs of students taped all

discussions as they were engaged in the process of writing together for twelve weeks, for approximately one hour per day, four times a week. The researcher was present for two of these four writing periods each week, observing the students and interacting with them through discussions in addition to formal and informal interviews. The students audiotaped all oral language during the writing sessions. All audiotaped writing events were transcribed as well as the formal and informal interviews with the students. Transcriptions were examined in relation to the research questions.

The researcher used a qualitative research approach, acting in a participant-observer role as both insider and outsider. As an insider I talked with students and conferenced with them when requested. As an outsider I observed and studied their behavior and conducted periodical interviews with them. As a participant observer I acted more within than upon the situation; the prolonged and repetitive observation allowing me to observe the students' behavior as it occured. The thick description (Wilcox, 1982) created enabled me to gain a clear picture of partnership writing.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited because of the following:

1. small sample size which reduces

generalizability

2. the fact that the students were cooperative and able to verbalize their thoughts reduces generalizability as not all students are able to do so

3. limited time constraints

4. the researcher's presence and the presence of the audiotapes. (Time was built in to the study to enable the students to become accustomed to working with tape recorders and to become acquainted with the researcher.)

Organization of the Thesis

Chapter 2 contains a survey of the literature in the areas of the writing process as it relates to education, cooperative learning, and talking and writing as means of learning. In addition the researcher's concept of partnership writing is presented.

Chapter 3 describes the design of the study. This includes the procedure, the sample, the data collection and analysis.

Chapter 4 presents a description of the partnerships.

Chapter 5 examines the major themes which emerged in the study. Analysis of this qualitative data is discussed

according to the themes of the phenomena of partnership writing, writing strategies, relationships, restructured partnerships, students' perceptions of partnership writing and expressive language.

Chapter 6 presents the summary and conclusions drawn from the research in response to the research questions and in addition examines the implications for educational practice and makes suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Overview

This chapter gives an overview of the pertinent research, in the areas of the writing process and of interactive learning, in order to provide a background for the study.

The Writing Process

Although much is still to be learned about the process of writing some understanding has been gained through the research of educators such as Donald Graves, Lucy Calkins, Sondra Perl, Janet Emig, Frank Smith and others. In attempting to identify the phases of the writing process, various descriptions have been cited, such "as prewriting, writing and rewriting, as circling out and circling back; as collecting and connecting" (Calkins, 1986, p.17). The process, however is not as linear and clear as is perhaps suggested, as writers often alternate between the phases throughout the entire process. The identification of these phases, however labelled, is useful in setting forth tentative guidelines in studying the writing process.

Donald Graves, (1983) one of the major proponents of the writing process approach, suggests that students learn the craft of writing through writing itself. He views writing as

a holistic process where learning takes place through the gradual development of the various aspects of the entire process. The importance of learning and of the cognitive activities of the writer (the process of writing) are stressed rather than the examination of the written product.

Graves (1975) categorizes the stages in the writing process as prewriting, composing, and postwriting. The prewriting phase preceeds the writing and often relates to environmental stimuli or to discussions with other persons. The composing phase is the operative act of writing and includes activities such as "spelling, resource use, accompanying language, pupil interactions, proofreadings, rereadings, interruptions, erasures and teacher articipation" (Graves, cited in Stacey, 1978, p. 15-16). The postwriting phase refers to "the product disposition, approval solicitation, material disposition, proofreading, and comtemplation of the finished product" (Stacey, p. 16).

Donald Murray refers to the writing process as "rehearsal, drafting, revision and editing" (cited in Calkins, 1986, p.17). Rehearsal involves a consciousness of seeing potential stories throughout all living experiences and a readiness to write about any and all of these experiences. Drafting involves revision, as the words become a way of seeing again, helping writers to develop their meanings. Editing involves the judgmental aspect of the process and may have negative connotations for the writer. Throughout

the writing process shifting occurs between rehearsal, drafting, revision and editing where students may be involved in any or all stages at a given time. Because of this continual shifting between phases and because of the unique process whereby each student develops his/her own writing techniques, the writing process does not lend itself to prescriptive methods of instruction, but is rather a self-discovery for each individual writer.

The research of Janet Emig (1971) focuses on the process of writing--on the behavior of skilled writers. Using a case study approach she investigated the composing processes of eight twelfth-grade students. The students were asked to compose aloud and to then provide introspective comments on this process. It was assumed that in composing aloud, the inner, mental process of composing would be externalized. Emig identified the following components of the writing process: the context, the nature of the stimuli, the prewriting and planning, the starting, the composing aloud, the stopping, the contemplating the product, the reformulation, and the seeming teacher influence. Her study has been influential in its emphasis on the writing process and has led to other case studies in this field.

Sondra Perl (1986) also studied the composing processes of writers. Her research was conducted with unskilled college writers. She used the written products and the introspec-

tive and retrospective comments of the students to gain an understanding of the processes they used in writing. She noted that many of the stages identified by Murray and Graves such as prewriting, writing and editing "appeared in a sequential pattern that (was) recognizable across writing sessions and across students" (Perl, cited in Watkins, 1985, p.29).

Interactive Learning

Oral Language and the Writing Process

Much of the recent research in the area of writing assumes the importance of oral language (Hansen, 1987; Graves, 1983,1985; Calkins, 1983,1986) and an approach to writing which emphasizes meaning and communication (Graves, 1985; Calkins, 1986; Emig, 1971; Murray, 1984). These educators also include cooperative group activities as part of students' language experiences following the research of James Britton (1973) and James Moffett (1983).

The positive effects of oral interaction surrounding literacy events is supported by Lucy Calkins (1983, 1986) in her books, "Lessons from a child" and "The art of teaching writing". She advocates an interactive model of learning and supports the use of oral language in writing. She also stresses the importance of teachers becoming observers of children's writing in order to extend their development.

Frank Smith (1983) suggests the use of a "literacy club" to foster writing in the classroom, where students use language as a social function. In discussing interaction he states, "Learning is ... collaborative because we learn from others helping us to achieve our own ends" (Smith, 1983, p.561) Sondra Perl, (1986) used a case study approach to examine the writing-teaching-learning processes in ten classrooms. She studied writing events and also teachers' perceptions of these events. One commonality which emerged in all classrooms was the fact that writing is a social event where the sharing of ideas was evident.

Further research expands this concept of 'interactive learning'. As William Teal (1982) states:

> Social interaction is the key. In fact, the whole process of natural literacy development hinges upon the experience the child has in reading or writing activities which are mediated by literate adults, older siblings, [or peers] ...the interactive events function as what might be usefully described as the inducer in the process [of writing]. (p.559)

Although this statement refers to early literacy events in the home, it is reasonable to assume, considering the supporting research of Murray, Smith, Graves, Moffett, and Britton, that it may also apply to literacy events at the upper elementary school level.

Judith Lindfors (1987) defines interaction as "a cooperative activity among two or more people" (Lindfors, 1987, p.327). She feels that interaction provides the opportunity for students to develop cognitively and socially. In addition, interaction also leads to different points of view, through encouraging students' individuality, creativity and their ability to think. In a cooperative activity where individual perceptions may differ, students must use their background knowledge and intellectual resources to defend a point of view or to criticize in a constructive manner. Working together, decentering and considering statements from another's point of view, students are able to use these resources as well as their previous knowledge.

Halliday's (1975) functional-interaction model of emergent oral language use has implications for written language. This model emphasizes that children learn language in context and through interaction with others in social situations. Written language then must be both situational and therefore within a meaningful context and it must also be embedded in social interaction. Both oral and written language are developmental processes--that is they are in constant change and growth and are dependent on both the context in which the language is used and upon the participant.

Research in the area of early literacy shows that as students begin to develop as writers, there is a great deal of transfer from their oral language (Tough, 1977).

> Talk is the basic form in which language is manifested. Written language is derived from talk and is disciplined by conventions that become necessary when intonation and pauses which are features of talk, can no longer play a part in conveying meaning. (Tough, 1977, p.7)

Although writing is derived from talk, it is not a simple replication of talk. As Vygotsky (1962) states, " Written speech is a separate linguistic function, differing from oral speech in both structure and mode of functioning" (P. 87). Much of the work of Jerome Harste (1984) is based on a Vygotskian perspective. Harste speaks of the "oral language supremacy assumption " (p.67). He does not support the assumption that oral language maps directly onto written language. Although there are commonalities, he admits that both systems have their own symbolic potential.

In discussing some of the differences between oral and written language, Frank Smith's (1982) description, in his book "Writing and the writer", is useful. These differences are many and varied but they are also subtle. Although oral and written language use the same vocabulary and grammar it is in their utilization that they differ. Smith compares the

differences between speaking and writing to the differences between:

> accompanying a visitor on a tour of your city and having to provide all the sightseeing information in advance. In the first case, the 'speaking situation', you and your visitor can wander where your whims take you ...and your descriptions can be related to immediate situations and to your visitor's particular needs and interests. But in the 'writing' situation,... your best course is to offer a detailed map with many routes marked out, including a lot of information that your visitor might not, in fact need (p. 73).

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate some of the major differences between oral and written language from the point of view of the producer (the speaker and the writer) and from the point of view of the receiver (the listener and the reader) (Smith, 1982).

MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE PRODUCER

The Speaker and the Writer

(Modified from Smith, 1982)

Speech

- can be spontaneous containing digressions and repetitions without a lack of understanding
- visual support of audience provides immediate feedback
- thinking and speaking simultaneously carried on
- content often not thought out or previously planned
- no permanent record - speaker must rely on memory for record of what previously said

Writing

- deliberate organization of thought mechanically presented in written form (lack of degressions)
- lack of immediate audience response necessitates thorough coverage of material therefore:
- information or knowledge cannot be assumed
- permanent record allows review of previous material
- the language itself (the words) are the communication therefore no reliance on tone, facial expression etc.

FIGURE 1

MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE RECEIVER

The listener and the Reader

(Modified from Smith, 1982)

Listener

- Listener must rely on memory for understanding or
- Listener can interject and ask for clarification and repetition
- Listener has no choice as to sequence in which material is presented or rate of presentation

Reader

- text can be used as record
- reader has power over time - he can read and reread at own pace
- rate of comprehension controled by reader
- sequence of material controled by reader

FIGURE 2

Oral Language and Emergent Literacy Research as it Relates to the Writing Process

Although there is little specific research in support of oral language (talk) as it relates directly to the process of writing in upper elementary grades, there is extensive research which examines the role of oral language in emergent literacy situations and with beginning writers (Dyson, 1981; Wells, 1981,1986; Tough, 1977).

It has been established that oral language is of great importance to young readers and writers (Lindfors, 1986; Wells, 1985,1986; Barnes, 1973, 1976; Tough, 1977; Martin, 1971; and Sulzby, 1987). Oral language (talk) is the basis of communication, and the form of language upon which other forms are built. The assimilation of new information (one type of learning) is supported by Barnes' (1973) statement that children need to "talk themselves into understanding" (p.14). In talking through ideas, thoughts are clarified, questions are asked, and perspective is gained. This "talk accompanying the child's general experiencing helps to direct the child's attention in different ways" (Luria, cited in Tough, 1977,p.7).

Much of the important research in the field of early literacy has centered around the work of Anne Haas Dyson. In her article, "Oral language: The rooting system for learning to write", D[illegible]) stresses the importance of talk in

the early writing processes of five-year-old children as she states: "Talk is an integral part of beginning to write and for some children, the systematic means of getting that meaning on paper (p.783). Joan Tough also emphasizes the role of oral language in developing literacy skills, stating that "Reading and writing both have their basis in talk and ways of using language for writing... must first be established through talk." (Tough, 1977, p.7)

Because of the abundance of research pertaining to oral language in the field of emergent literacy and because most adults play an important role in the oral language development of their children, many of us have an understanding of how children learn to talk. Our understanding of how children learn to write however seems to be more limited. In contrast to the abundance of literature concerning the role of oral language in early literacy development, much less attention has been paid to oral language as it relates to older students in their reading and writing attempts. Once students have developed reasonable skills in writing, the oral form is often neglected in the classroom. Is it assumed that one moves beyond oral language to the written form?

Is it possible that the oral mode of language is as important for the developing writer, in the upper elementary grades, as it is for the emergent writer in the first few years of schooling? As Gordon Wells (1985) states, "our

research has not yet had time to focus on talk between children and their peers" (p.1).

In the article, "Beyond Lip-service: Discourse development after the age of nine", Terry Phillips (1985) identifies various styles of talking, adding that each fosters a different cognitive process. In a study which attemped to gain a clearer picture of older children's use of talk, Phillips discussed the characteristics of five modes of talking found in the oral language of 10 to 12 year olds. Phillips supports the present researcher's view that "there is extensive information available from research into the early years of language development, but very little to help our understanding of what occurs in later years" (p.78). He also states that "no serious study of the styles of spoken language ... of older children ... [in] peer-group style..." has been undertaken. (p.75) It is for these reasons and with the support of the educational research cited, that the present study was undertaken.

Talking and Writing as Means of Learning

Talking and writing serve as useful scaffolding tools for language learning. The concept of scaffolding was first used by Jerome Bruner (1978) to explain "the temporary framework adults created to support children in their attempts to use language successfully" (Lehr, 1985, p.667). This support may also be supplied by peers, where a more-learned student is able to lead and extend a less-able student in his/her

learning. As children talk and write together, sharing ideas, asking questions and presenting challenges, they are offering these temporary scaffolds to each other, through their supportive interaction.

The concept of scaffolding had its origin in the work of L.S. Vygotsky (1962) who viewed learning as a social-based, interactive process. Words such as cooperation, collaboration, and "collective activity" (Lindfors, 1987, p.273) are associated with Vygotsky's (1962) concept of learning. Vygotsky stated, "What a child can do in cooperation today, he can do alone tomorrow" (p.101). In a similar statement he also remarked, "What a child can do with assistance today, she will be able to do by herself tomorrow" (p.87). The words "cooperation" and "assistance" are the key words in the scaffolding concept.

This developmental approach which concentrates on the positive aspects of children's learning is essential to an understanding of the process of writing and cooperative learning. Talking and writing have much to offer in situations which Vygotsky identified as "the zone of proximal development", the area of discrepancy between the point where a child is able to solve problems independently and his potential level. In this zone, the child is able to solve problems, but it is with assistance or in collaboration that he is able to do so.

Within this very important area (zone) of learning the child is able to extend himself beyond the limits he is able to attain independently. Within this fluid zone of development and with the assistance of a (more competent) peer, the child is enabled to internalize concepts and to eventually understand and use them independently, using the language as a mode of learning to move from his actual ability level to his potential ability level. Thus interaction, (talking and writing) become the tools for learning. To quote Vygotsky,

> Learning awakens a variety of internal development processes that are able to operate when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. (Vygotsky, 1978, p.90)

Talking to learn

Learning is difficult to observe, to assess and even to discuss as no one is truly certain what learning looks like. Britton (1986) defines learning as "coming to know something about the world we did not know before..." (p. 105). Britton (1970) supports the notion of talk as a mode of learning as he states: "The importance of good conversation in small intimate...groups can hardly be over-emphasized. It paves the way for class discussion which ... may be a principal mode of learning." (p.239)

All learning activities are language based and it is through language that children make sense of their world. This assumption which is vital in helping children to become literate is one which is often overlooked in many classrooms. Where children's talk was once regarded as unproductive and seen as impeding education it is now looked upon as a mode of learning (Moffett, 1983; Barnes, Britton & Rosen, 1986. 3rd ed.). Since "Language the learner and the school" (Barnes, Britton & Rosen, 1986. 3rd ed,) was published in the late 1960's many educators and researchers see talk as an important means of learning. Britton (1986) states,

> Since learning doesn't take place to numbers however, and will probably sometimes take place in a very disorderly fashion, it is impossible to set out, marshalled and docketed like the exhibits in a museum. Glimpses of it are to be found, first, in what people say to each other. (p.92)

Barnes, Britton & Rosen (1986), identied three functions of language used to learn - transactional, referring to language which is used to impart information; expressive, referring to language which is used to share feelings and ideas; and poetic, referring to language which is used to experience symbolic concepts. Expressive language, very much like written speech, plays an important role in

language development and it is expressive language which will be emphasized in this study of partnership writing. Expressive language--language between friends, acts as a 'road in', a bridge for more sophisticated language growth. This bridging is made possible through the use of this easy-going, personal 'learning language'.

Because expressive language is language which is natural to the user, it "generates situations of confidence and reciprocity between people... and it is the language in which we can all take risks" (Britton, 1977, cited in "Language in the classroom: A Series", p.7). Thus through this free-wheeling flow of ideas and feelings, students are enabled to construct knowledge from their own world experiences. They are able to approach learning in their own way and in their own words. Although expressive language may, in the past, have been considered substandard or unlike 'school language', it is the only language students have, and thus it is the language through which they must process their thinking if they are to assimilate new knowledge and learn. Learning through one's own language promotes a sense of self-worth and of significance, acting as a beginning and as a catalyst for further learning.

In their book, "Talking, writing and learning 8-13", Mallett and Newsome (1977) use the term "expressive talk" (p.161) to explain the role of oral language.

Expressive talk - talk to make things clearer

> for ourselves, talk to sort through developing ideas, talk to test out our insights against those of others - is a potent means of learning. (p.161)

In order to make sense of their world, children need to relate new information to existing information. Talking ideas through or as Barnes says "talking themselves into understanding" (Barnes, 1973, p.14) is an ideal way of assimilating information. Luria states: "The talk accompanying the child's general experiencing helps to direct the child's attention in different ways." (Luria, cited in Tough, 1977.p.7)

The writing process approach advocated by Graves (1983, 1985) acknowledges the role of talking to learn, through peer interaction which Graves calls conferencing. In conferencing, students discuss others' writing and respond in such a way that there is a positive outcome. This type of natural learning, which emphasizes the process rather than the product, also recognizes the active nature of children's learning.

Gordon Wells (1985) also supports the use of talk in literacy learning as he states:

> The juxtaposition of 'Talking and Learning' is intended to emphasize the close connection that exists between the two activities. Certain-

> ly... it is through talking that children learn, and what they learn is both their native language and the experience that is expressed through that language. In fact the two things go on simultaneously and the most important feature of a child's language experience is that it is conversational in nature. (Wells, 1985, p.1)

In her article, "From information to understanding", Nancy Martin (1973) describes a situation where two twelve-year-old boys are enabled to better understand new information through discussion and exploratory talk. Martin's suggestion that children need opportunities to talk themselves into understanding is further explained as she states:

> We can't really be said to know something until we've made it part of our thinking and explored its implications....Often this involves shaking up and reorganizing a whole system of ideas by which we explain the world to ourselves (p.12).

The role of talk as a means of learning is further supported by Barnes and Torbe (1977) as they state:

> ...children are able to talk to good purpose, and to increase their understanding, without calling on adult resources....We do believe,

> however, that children are often underestimated and that they possess skills and competencies which are rarely called upon... (p. ix)

Writing as a Means of Learning

Although it is difficult to segment and to isolate areas of language learning, realizing that all areas overlap and are mutually supportive, this final section will deal with writing as a means of learning.

Halliday (1973) points out that children learn language and how to use it, simultaneously. Smith (1982) argues that "not just language and its uses are learned simultaneously, but... it is through its uses that language is learned." (Smith, 1982, p.170).

In her book, "Learning to think through writing", Lucy Calkins (1985) extends this concept of language learning through language use, to the area of writing. She writes that 'thinking' shows itself, as children begin to revise, as they begin to engage in conferences with teachers and peers, and finally that the thinking truly manifests itself as the children began to interact with their own texts without the assistance of another. Calkins believes that writing is a means of pulling ideas together, rather than an exercise to show what one knows about other content areas.

Janet Emig (1977) discusses the value of writing as a mode of learning.

> Writing serves learning uniquely because writing as process-and-product possesses a cluster of attributes that correspond uniquely to certain powerful learning strategies. (p.122)

In support of the cognitive value of writing, Emig refers to the research of Vygotsky, Luria and Bruner who point out that "the higher cognitive functions such as analysis and synthesis seem to develop most fully only with the support system of ... written language" (Emig, 1977, p. 122). In her article, "Writing as a mode of learning", Emig discusses the unique differences and the correspondence between talking and writing. She asserts that "writing represents a unique mode of learning - not merely valuable, not merely specific, but unique (p.122).

Cooperative Learning

The concept of cooperative learning is not a new idea in education; rather it has undergone substantial renewal recently, due mainly to the research of Johnson and Johnson (1975, 1981) and Slavin (1980, 1982, 1985). The term cooperative learning refers to a situation where learning takes place in small, heterogeneous groups through interaction with peers and where recognition is based on both the group and the individual performance.

The term 'cooperative learning', frequently connotates specific and prescriptive techniques or models, and is often

associated with the work of David and Roger Johnson, who are responsible for its recent resurgence. The most widely used models however, have been developed by a number of different researchers. The most common models are Slavin's (1978) Student Teams Achievement, Aronson's (1978) Jigsaw I and II, Devries' & Slavin's (1978), Teams-Games-Tournament, Sharon's (1980) Group Investigation Method and Johnson & Johnson'a (1975) Learning Together Approach.

Acknowledging these specific, prescriptive techniques advocated by the above researchers and in particular the cooperative learning model of Johnson & Johnson, it was deemed that a more flexible and open-ended interpretation was necessary in this study. The students were grouped in pairs and devised their own strategies and techniques for working together. No specific guidelines or expectations were set, in order that the study remain exploratory in nature.

In this study then 'cooperative learning' does not refer to the specific 'method' advocated by Johnson & Johnson. Many recent studies use the term 'cooperative learning' with little or no reference to the original research cited above. Terms such as 'cooperative', 'collaborative' and 'interactive' are often used interchangeably. In accordance with many of these recent studies, while yet acknowledging the original research, the three terms are also used interchangeably in the present study. The more general label

of 'interactive learning' however, serves as an umbrella term, under which the other two apply.

One would expect that schools would emphasize cooperative learning techniques, since cooperation is such a necesesary part of the adult world for which education hopefully prepares students. However competition, where one student's success is often dependent on another student's failure, is often prevalent in the education system. In response to the concern about the competitive nature of schooling, cooperative learning programs have been developed which aim at "reducing students' isolation and percieved hostile climates that exist in highly competitive classrooms and at increasing students' abilities to interact and work together with other students toward common goals" (Slavin, 1981, p.659). In a cooperative environment, learning is an interactive and supportive endeavor, one which fosters the life skills of communication and cooperation rather than competition.

An impressive body of research has focused on the positive effects of cooperative learning. Aronson (1978), Slavin (1981), Sharan (1980) and Johnson & Johnson (1974, 1975, 1981, 1986) have written extensive reviews of recent research on coperative learning. Their results suggest that cooperative learning has a beneficial effect on student achievement, (in particular with the low achieving student), on student problem-solving abilities, and on the student's

social skills. In his synthesis Slavin (1981) suggests that the principles of cooperative learning have also been widely accepted by teachers. Parker (1984) supports those statements as well by suggesting that cooperative learning fosters the development of thinking and problem-solving skills.

Studies in collaborative or cooperative learning (Bruffee, 1983; Burke, 1985; Dyson & Genishi, 1982; Ede & Lunsford, 1985; Johnson & Johnson, 1975, 1981, 1986; McKenzie, 1985; Slavin, 1978,1980,1981,1985; Wells, 1981) have shown that students learn both skills and content material more effectively as part of a group. Cooperative learning situations foster the life skills of communication and cooperation while developing the student's cognitive abilities.

A positive view of collaborative learning is evident in Carolyn Burke's (1985) writing. She feels that in a collaborative arrangement the participants are equal partners, each seeing himself as a reader and writer. Because all responsibilities are shared in a collaborative learning situation there is also a great deal of accountability.

In a cooperative learning event where students are enabled to "construct and reconstruct views of the world around them, ... jointly" (Barnes, 1986, p.1), learning is facilitated through interaction. The classroom is an

excellent environment for providing this supportive interaction. Vygotsky states: "What a child can do with assistance today, she will be able to do by herself tomorrow" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 87). Many educators assume that it must be the teacher playing the supportive, interactive role. But:

> children also play the supportive role for one another in classrooms where such interactions are encouraged, respected, and valued. We see and hear this peer support as children collaborate .... (Lindfors, 1986, p.248)

The Concept of Partnership Writing

Partnership writing as presented in this study involves two students working together, collaborating orally in order to produce a written text. Based on a Vygotskian (1978) perspective where language has a social base, the two students talk through and sort out their ideas, assisting and supporting each other in the process of writing. Vygotsky (1978) identifies this support as the "zone of proximal development" where emphasis is placed on what a student can do with the assistance and support of others, not what he or she can do alone.

In their recent article, "Let them write together", Ede and Lunsford discuss the benefits of shared writing in order to justify its use. Shared writing "demonstrates the way in

which we share or collaborate in making sense of the world around us, in creating our own realities and selves." (Ede and Lunsford, 1985. p. 126) Ede and Lunsford urge teachers to go " beyond Graves injunction to '"let them write"' and to let them write - together." (p. 126)

Frank Smith (1982) says:

> ... to want to write, a child must see writing done and see what writing can do. One way to see writing being done is to see someone else doing it. But an even more potent experience is to be involved in the doing oneself. (p.200)

The partnership writing situation incorporates these two important aspects of learning to write; that of being involved and of seeing someone else in the process of writing.

Much of the recent research focusing on children's collaborative writing has tended to emphasize studies involving computer assisted learning. Many of these studies cite the beneficial use of computers in enhancing children's enjoyment of writing and in improving the quality of this writing (Daiute, 1985; Dickinson, 1986). In her article, "Cooperation, collaboration, and a computer: Integrating a computer into a first-second grade writing program", Dickinson (1986) states:

> Collaborative computer writing may add an

> important dimension to the writing program by encouraging children to articulate plans and reactions to the writing of a peer. We need to learn more about the effects of encouraging collaborative writing in classrooms where other approaches to writing instruction are being used and more about how older children interact when writing together. (p.376)

Research shows that in a writing group students' apprehensions about writing are reduced (Fox, 1980). Research also supports both the concepts of cooperative learning and of process writing combined (Moffett, 1968; Macrorie, 1970; McKenzie, 1971; Murray, 1985; Elbow, 1973; Smith, 1982; Langer & Applebee, 1984; Ede & Lunsford, 1985; Dyson, 1985; Gere & Abbott, 1985; Wood, 1987; Johnson & Johnson, 1987). These theorists and educators cite some of the benefits of collaborative writing as:

- Students are more aware of a sense of audience.
- Teachers are more able to circulate and assist individual students.
- Students are exposed to various writing styles as they respond to others' work.
- Students have a stronger sense of motivation for writing and for revising.
- Students are enabled to develop a sense of cooperation and community through the group.

In partnership writing the desire to interact through language is encouraged and fostered. Because of the social nature of the task the student's interest is maintained. As students work together on a paired writing task, orchestrating their own learning they inquire, inform, argue and negotiate the writing through the use of exploratory language. The experience of being an audience (reader) as well as a writer has strong educative effects on partners. Through purposeful interaction students make full use of their language capabilities such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Learning is also facilitated by the obligation to interact (to read, to write and to respond) because of the relationship.

The concept of partnership writing is also based on the underlying philosophy of Barnes (1972) as he states "the learners have an opportunity to talk with others in order to go back over experience and represent it to themselves" (Barnes, 1972, p.30). Working one's way around a problem, thinking it through, shaping and reshaping out loud - these are what Barnes terms "exploratory talk" (p.28). He argues that talk and writing are the major means by which we learn.

Summary

In this chapter a review of research on the process of writing was presented. The importance of oral language as it relates to the process of writing was stressed. The concepts

of cooperative learning and of talking and writing as means of learning were also presented. A review of the research pertaining to the study of oral language as it relates to writing, revealed that the majority of this research has been conducted with children in the early years of schooling. There appears to be little research dealing with oral language and the composing processes of upper elementary students. Although emergent literacy research has implications for older students, further understanding is needed in the area of talk as it accompanies the writing process of older students. It is from this beginning then that the study of cooperative writing is undertaken.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Overview

This chapter describes the nature of the study, the sample selection and the techniques for gathering and analysing the data. Information regarding the research methodology and the researcher's perspective is also presented.

Nature of the Study

This study is descriptive and exploratory in nature. Four students were grouped in pairs for the purpose of writing together over a twelve week period. The pairs, which I am calling partnerships, were involved in the study for four days each week for approximately forty-five minutes. The researcher was present on two of those four days; however the students used tape recorders at all writing sessions. The description in this study is based on information obtained from the researcher's analyses of the interactions of the partnerships, the formal and informal interviews with the students and the teacher, the researcher's observational fieldnotes and the student's compositions.

Descriptive, Qualitative Research

Much of the research in the field of education in the last two decades involves the use of ethnographic techniques. The ethnographic paradigm which is now an accepted form of research can be described as "a descriptive endeavor in which the researcher attempts to accurately describe and interpret the nature of social discourse " (Wilcox, 1982, p. 558). It was deemed that the most appropriate techniques for gathering data about the nature of the writing process of students working collaboratively--in partnerships--were those of an ethnographic nature. Ethnographic techniques were also deemed appropriate because of the fact that this methodology operates from within rather than upon the situation being studied and allows behavior to be observed and recorded as it occurs.

Ethnographic research, adapted from the field of anthropology and often referred to as qualitative research in educational circles, includes the all important aspect of meaning in human behavior. Spindler (1982) describes ethnography as "collection of data in the field through observations and interviews" (p.3). In this study the prolonged and repetitive observations and the use of extensive quotations from the interactive partnerships enabled the researcher to create what is called "thick description" (Wilcox, 1982, p.558). One of the techniques which is central to this study and which is closely

associated with anthropological research is that of participant observation. Participant observation refers to participating in, and making observations about what we participate in, at the same time.

Researcher's Perspective

In order to emphasize the importance of using the participant observation technique, it is necessary to establish the perspective of the researcher at this point. Due to the interactive nature of the study (the noise factor) and because the researcher was interested in an in-depth study of the partnership phenomena, the research was not conducted within the classroom setting. The students were thus removed from their classroom environment.

The classroom from which the students came had a direct relevance to the study. The students were part of a classroom in which the teacher respected the individual writing stategies, while yet providing guidelines and expectations for their learning. Support and assistance in the form of individual conferences was therefore provided when needed or requested. The teacher often observed the students during the writing process and learned from this how each could be helped in the conferences. The students were familiar with group conferences, called "author's circle". They used questioning and response techniques and

often conducted these conferences effectly, without a supervising adult.

Lucy Calkins (1986) discusses this interactive, coaching role of the teacher as she states "If we, as writing teachers watch how our students go about writing then we can help them develop more effective strategies." (p.15)

In emulating this classroom environment and approach to the process of writing, the participant observation method of research was an excellent opportunity to both maintain this approach and to conduct the research. Because of the researcher's varying degrees of involvement which the participant observation method acknowledges, the researcher was able to assist and support the writers through conferencing in a manner similar to that of the classroom teacher. In order to ensure validity as to conference procedures and perceptions, the classroom teacher was involved in the conferencing of the partnership writers at one point in the study and her comments and suggestions were recorded.

In order to further illustrate the researcher's perspective one of the characteristics of the participant observation method is presented. As Spradley explains "the participant observer will experience being both the insider and the outsider simililtaneously" (Spradley, 1980. p.56). As an insider and former classroom teacher for sixteen years, the researcher talked with students about their writing and

conferenced with them on specific aspects of the writing when requested. The researcher was engaged in the writing process, in the form of observation notes and journal entries, in addition to listening to the students as they shared their problems and successes. Stated explicitly, the researcher engaged "in activities appropriate to the situation" (p. 56), and to the writing process. As an outsider the researcher observed the students--their writing and their interactions--as a phenomena to be studied where the 'ordinary' became 'special' and everyday details became my research data. The researcher attempted to increase her awareness and to raise her level of attention to "tune in to things usually tuned out" (p. 56). The researcher became part of the research itself.

The possibilities for involvement as participant observer, were dictated by the writing process--by the need for conferences at crucial and timely moments. The researcher was the principal research instrument in the process of observing and interpreting. The researcher was also instrumental in bringing her world view, her previous research and professional expertise to the situation. As the partnerships evolved, so then did the role as participant observer. It was in this manner and with this perspective of "listening, watching, and allowing these [students] to become my teachers" (Spradley, 1980, p.vi) that the research was conducted.

Through making in-depth observations and participating in a social situation such as this it is possible that bias is created simply by being an informant. The researcher acknowledges these possible implications and therefore no attempt is made to generalize beyond the present study. What generalizations are made refer to this group of four students in this partnership arrangement. As every ethnographic description will always be in need of revision and "is a partial ethnography, there is always more or less that could have been done (Spradley, 1980, p. 159).

Sample

Selection of Classroom Environment

The proposed design of this study necessitated a classroom with two basic characteristics--an environment where students were involved in writing on a regular basis and one in which there appeared to be a supportive atmosphere among students in their learning endeavors. The students in the grade five classroom chosen were familiar with working in a cooperative manner in small groups during sessions where they actively shared and responded to others' writing. In addition they seemed to form spontaneous groups or partnerships as needed. The teacher appeared to be comfortable with having the students find their own work space in and around the classroom for individual writing or

for sharing sessions. At any given time students appeared to be at various stages in their writing.

After visiting many classrooms and observing the various approaches to the teaching of writing, the researcher chose one classroom with the desired characteristics and in which the teacher was willing to support the intentions and integrity of the study. The necessary permission for carrying out the study was obtained.

Selection of Students

Two pairs of students were selected on the basis of the teacher's judgment in consultation with the researcher. The four students represented a cross section of ability levels in their writing development. The criteria for selecting these students was that they were reasonably cooperative and that they had an ability to verbalize their thoughts. These criteria were deemed necessary due to the fact that the major portion of the data collected was through the use of audiotaped conversations while writing.

The parents of the four students chosen received a brief letter containing information about the study, and requesting that their children be allowed to participate. (See Appendix A.) Written permission was obtained from the parents of each selected student. These parents allowed their children to be involved in the twelve week study and

gave permission for the use of a taperecorder while the children were writing with a partner.

Techniques for Gathering Data

The major portion of the data was gathered through the audiotaped transcriptions of the oral language of each pair during their writing episodes. It was envisaged that this interaction would be of primary importance to the study. Detailed observational fieldnotes and formal and informal interviews with the students were also key methodological tools used and became part of the major source of data in this study. Two further sources of data were the students' written texts and the researcher's written correspondence with the teacher at various points during the study. The researcher did not keep a separate journal as the observational fieldnotes contained many introspective and personal reflections and therefore a separate entity was not deemed necessary.

Audiotaped Transcriptions

Whether the researcher was or was not present, the students recorded their conversations at each writing event through the use of a tape recorder. (see Appendix D.) This enabled the researcher to have an accurate ethnographic record of verbal interactions throughout all writing episodes. Facial expressions and body language were also recorded throughout the observational fieldnotes to supplement this data. In

order to avoid translation or simplification the researcher listened to and transcribed all conversations verbatim (one hundred hours). The advisor also listened to selected tapes and discussion was undertaken by the researcher and advisor in order to verify the researcher's assumptions.

Observational Fieldnotes

The two pairs of students were observed in a location separate from the classroom setting. This was necessitated by a lack of space and by the high level of noise in the teaching area containing two classrooms. As the students often formed spontaneous groups and moved to locations outside the classroom this procedure was not unfamiliar to them. Detailed observational notes were written during the twelve weeks of the study in an attempt to discover what was actually happening in the partnership writing situations. (See Appendix C.)

Interviews

The four students involved in the partnerships were interviewed on three separate occasions--at the beginning, the middle and he end of the study. The purpose for this was to gain a better understanding of specific issues. Open-ended questions which grew out of the study itself were asked and students were encouraged to use their own language and terminology in order to elicit their thinking and perceptions. The interviews were conducted individually and

in the presence of partners in order to verify information received. The data collected also contained many informal, spontaneous discussions which were usually initiated by the students themselves and often took the form of conferences where questions were asked by both the students and the researcher. Interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. Informal discussions were also taped and transcribed. An example of a formal interview and of an informal discussion is contained in Appendix E.

Examination of Student's Written Texts

Examples of the student's written work over the twelve week period were collected. This included rough drafts, second and sometimes third drafts as well as some published material.(See Appendix F.) These samples were used to verify assumptions made from the audiotapes, observations, and the interviews. The students in this classroom were accumstomed to keeping a writing folder with drafts at various stages of the writing process, for perusal by the teacher or by peers.

Written Correspondence With the Teacher

The teacher was asked to respond to the researcher's statements at various times during the study, through written correspondence and formal interviews. An example of her written statements and of an interview transcription is included in Appendix B.

Building Rapport.

Establishing and maintaining a good rapport with the students was necessary because of the close contact which the researcher would need to have in order to obtain her data. The students were familiar with the researcher as she worked with the entire class for four weeks on an extensive art project prior to the present study. The researcher was also present during a number of writing periods, informally conferencing with students and acting as an additional resource person within the classroom.

Analysis of the Data

A six-step procedure was used for data analysis:

1. All audiotaped recordings were transcribed.
2. All observational fieldnotes were read and examined in order to identify themes and categories.
3. All interviews were transcribed.
4. Student's texts were examined to verify assumptions made from fieldnotes and transcriptions.
5. Written correspondence with the teacher was examined to obtain an additional perspective on various aspects of the study.
6. The research data was examined with reference to

original research questions.

Validity and Reliability

Three major steps were used in this study to ensure validity and reliability.

1. One hundred hours of audiotaped transcriptions comprised the major portion of the data.
2. Selected transcripts were discussed with the advisor and the classroom teacher.
3. The classroom teacher was consulted throughout the study with regard to conferencing and to classroom and student descriptions.

Summary

In this chapter the design of the study has been described. Data collection techniques and analysis were discussed as well as student and classroom selection. Information regarding the methodology was also presented. The following chapter presents a description of the partnerships.

CHAPTER FOUR

TALKING AND WRITING TOGETHER - THE PARTNERSHIPS

Overview

This chapter presents a description of the partnerships. Brief profiles of each of the four students are presented in addition to a description of the classroom from which the students came. A general overview of the partnerships is presented, followed by a detailed description of each partnership as it emerged.

Brief Student Profiles

In order to understand the two partnerships, it is necessary first to have an understanding of the four individuals of which the partnerships were comprised. The four students brought "separate realities" (Spradley, 1980, p. vii) to the partnerships and thus an understanding of these separate realities is necessary before looking at the partnerships in detail. What follows is a brief profile of each of the four students.

Sharon

Sharon was an enthusiastic ten-year-old student with a constant smile and eyes that flashed when she spoke. She often spoke of an older sister who was cited as an exceptional student and who seemed to have a great deal of

influence over Sharon. Sharon's mother expressed concern that perhaps Sharon resented her sister's abilities. There appeared to be much support from home, as Sharon's mother encouraged Sharon to develop her own strengths and to be an individual. It was reported by the classroom teacher that Sharon did not read until grade three. By grade five however she was an avid reader. Sharon loved to write and often wrote on her own at home, bringing her compositions to share with her classroom teacher. Sharon was reported to be an above average student although her parents expressed concern at her spelling abilities. Perhaps because of this stated concern for spelling she preferred not to do the actual transcribing in the partnership, stating that "Erica is a much better speller and so she should do the writing, don't you think?"

Sharon expressed the need for a quiet and uncrowded work space in order to write. "I like peace and quiet. My favorite time to write is - for some reason I like to have a room to myself with a window and if it's raining I look out the window. It helps me to think. In the car too I think, as I watch the fields go by and I think about being lost in that field and I don't really write the story but kind of in my head."

On one occasion Sharon explained her strategy of writing to me. She stated that she would write her ideas in rough and would then go back to reread and revise. She found that if

she concentrated too much on the mechanics of writing in the first draft she "lost her ideas thinking about spelling and commas and all those things". Sharon was very aware of how she wrote - of the processes she went through, in order to produce a written text. She often used words such as "rough draft", "first" and "second draft", "conference", "revise" and "publish" in response to my questions or when talking with her partner. Sharon was concerned by the fact that she did not understand how to use quotation marks "even though I've tried to figure it out - cause I need to have people talk in my stories, but I just can't get it". Sharon waved her arms in the air in a circular motion when she referred to quotation marks calling them "those things you use for talking".

Sharon also stated that she often talked to herself when she wrote. She said: "I pretend like I've got somebody else--it seems like it's coming from the back of my head, like I ask myself a question about my writing and then I answer myself--I even ask my characters questions, you know, to find out more about them."

Before beginning the partnership I asked Sharon what she thought about being in a project called partnerhip writing. Her reply: "I love to write and of course I love to talk - who doesn't?" She approached the partnership then in a very positive and enthusiastic manner.

Erica

Erica was a very serious ten-year-old student who excelled in school. She was quiet and consciencious and although she appeared to be quite shy in the large classroom, her strong assertiveness and at times inflexibility, came through in the partnership. Erica was very reserved and did not usually speak of her family or her personal feelings. At times Erica appeared to be withdrawn and shy, when in actuality she was thinking deeply about what was being said. She often paused when asked a question to think carefully and give an answer that she felt was complete and correct. After serious consideration Erica would then burst forth with her answer in an intense voice.

The classroom teacher stated that Erica had just had "a very dry spell where she didn't write at all during writing time but that she continued to work hard in all other areas." The teacher shared the fact that Erica seemed more comfortable with teacher-initiated topics. Left on her own to write she often had a difficult time getting started. Once started however she wrote fluently. Erica often used picture books as starting points for her writing and stated that "from one picture book, I can write quite a few different versions. I just can't start from nothing!"

Erica had an excellent memory. Her teacher stated that she was able to "regurgitate incredible amounts of factual

information". Erica was not a person who spoke in class unless requested, her spare moments being spent reading.

Dana

Dana was an only child whose teacher stated that he "had had exposure in the areas of travel and theater in addition to the many areas which most children experience such as TV, movies, and organized sports activites." He had a natural gift of humor and was a very articulate speaker. He recieved a great deal of positive reinforcement from home and spoke admiringly of his mother and father. He was very proud of the fact that his mother was a "working mother". His mother often typed his stories for him after he had completed his first and second drafts. Dana wanted to learn to type and stated, "You know what I think's neat? I'd have a good teacher at home--my mom she's a secretary." On the insistence of his teacher and his mother Dana read orally each evening while his mother prepared supper. Dana also spoke admiringly of his father and shared some of the special aspects of their relationship such as the various nick-names his father called him. His manners and sense of humor made him a popular student with all staff members.

Dana was also very popular with his peers due to his positive outlook and sensitivity to others. Although he was a natural leader, exerting control over his audience because of his natural ability with oral language, he did not misuse

his popularity and showed concern when many students wanted to work with him.

Dana's creative mind enabled him to take an idea and to mould and shape it into an exciting story, often to the sheer delight of peers and teachers. His goal was to become a comedian and although his sense of humor sometimes caused minor difficulties in the classroom, he responded well to discipline. Spelling caused difficulties for Dana. He would often say "but who cares right?" and then strive to improve in this area. Dana was not an avid reader or writer until his grade five year, perhaps due to the stimulating language arts program which his teacher offered in this grade.

At ten years old, Dana was aware of different writing styles and of his own style. He became extremely interested in the writing of Eric Wilson, and tried to copy this author's way of writing mystery stories. He was aware of how Wilson used narration and dialogue in a mutually supportive way and of how Wilson "planted his clues" (Dana) in his mystery stories. Dana shared his throughts about this style saying:

> Well, I'm trying to write in his style 'cause I like the style he writes--Tom's heart was pounding harder and harder--well, see I sort of cheated in my story, I used Tom, Liz and Ditmar in my story except I changed Tom's last name to Houston instead of Austin. I didn't make Tom and Liz related. I like Tom Austin. I've read 5 or 6

> of Eric Wilson's books--like it's inside my head. I can do it almost like he does--like I hear this voice in my head say--A man approached with a pistol. Tom's heart stopped. The man was about to ... see? It just comes to me. I hear this deep voice in my head, but not mine (laughter kinda like a real author speaking to me. (laughter again) I thought, like who's books are like the perfect style and Eric Wilson's so?

Dana enjoyed thinking about his writing and contemplating the meanings. He often composed aloud, adding reflective comments. Dana used his humor to vent frustration and criticism in the partnership and therefore was able to maintain the relationship through many difficult situations. As the partnership progressed Dana became very frustrated by the domineering nature of his partner, and used his humor to vent this frustration as he yelled "Yes, my suppressor! " The laughter which followed enabled Dana to solve his own problem, although his partner was unaware of the meaning of the word 'suppressor'. Dana's humor often went unnoticed by his partner, but he did not point this out on any of these occasions.

When reading orally, Dana's voice was intense and full of expression. He became totally involved in this reading and often reflected on the characters in his stories after reading. He did not appear to have difficulty finding topics

to write about because as he stated, "one idea just leads to another you know". Dana often apologized for being what he called "out of control" in class and in the partnership. He commented on his life saying " sometimes my life's so fast that I can't control it. I think of so many things all at once I go nuts".

Craig

Craig was a good-looking, ten-year-old boy with a rather sad expression. He appeared to harbor much resentment over his parents' separation and over his new dad-to-be. The classroom teacher reported that he "was often quite chippy in class and needed considerable positive reinforcement to keep him going." Craig's image of himself was that he was a "bad kid--I've always been a bad kid--like at school and at home".

Craig found writing very difficult and his classroom teacher indicated that his developmental level was below grade level. His efforts at school were sporadic and often he appeared to be very angry at the world in general. He had great difficulty getting ideas down, and spelling was a major stumbling block for him. His teacher was very positive with Craig in all interactions and encouraged him continuously. She felt that his reluctance to write possibly stemmed from pressure from home, and the lack of positive reinforcement in many areas of his life. Craig was a sports enthusiast and was involved in hockey and soccer. He was not

interested in reading, but was involved in daily reading due to the insistence of his teacher and his mother. Craig had viewed an extensive selection of movies, many of which were adult-rated and of a violent nature.

Craig appeared to look up to Dana as did many other students. Although it seemed that he idolized Dana within the partnership, Craig became very dominant and spent much of the time yelling at Dana. Craig became very frustrated when Dana did not respond in a similar manner, but responded instead with humorous remarks. Craig looked forward to the partnership and stated "finally someone will listen to me and help me--I can't write much--I don't do well in school at all you know." This attitude that someone was going to help him eventually became a negative factor, as Craig appeared to expect his partner to "come up with most of the ideas."

Classroom Description - From Whence They Came

The four students were chosen because of the particular classroom of which they were a part. After spending one afternoon each week for four weeks working with this grade five class on a Christmas art project, I asked the teacher and the students if they would allow me to spend a few weeks with them, learning from them about their writing. The students seemed pleased and were comfortable with me in their classroom. I circulated among the students, giving

assistance when solicited and sharing in their group conferences. After this initial six-week period, I felt that this classroom offered an excellent opportunity in which to conduct my research. Some of the reasons for this decision were:

-Students were actively involved in all aspects of the writing process on a regular, daily basis.

-The classroom teacher appeared to have created a supportive environment where all students were writing at their individual level.

-In addition to responding to the students' writing, she imposed some expectations and guidelines for them.

-The teacher's attitude appeared to be one in which writing was viewed as a developmental process, whereby at any one time, individual students would be working at various stages of the writing process.

-The teacher worked toward accenting and extending each student's strengths, while also improving their areas of weakness. The process of writing was stressed and students were involved in writing

various drafts of their compositions.

-The students appeared to form spontaneous groups whenever necessary in and around the classroom, in order to assist each other in the writing.

After my initial visits during writing time, the classroom teacher explained the approach to writing in her classroom.

She stated that initially, she worked with the entire class on the different steps in the process of writing. She modelled these steps through her own writing and through a small number of group compositions. The following steps in her approach were displayed on a wall chart.

WRITE

CONFERENCE

REWRITE - (SECOND DRAFT) - REVISE

EDIT

PUBLISH

As the year proceeded and the students became accustomed to the steps in the writing process, and as they began to write on their own, a system was developed whereby the students indicated on a wall chart, the stage at which

they were working at any one time. Strategies, responses and questions were then modelled for group conferences called "Author's Circle". Students appeared to follow these steps independently, in all conferences. Conference strategies consisted of allowing the 'writer' to first read his/her composition without interruption. Each listener would then give one positive statement about the composition. Questions were then directed to the writer. The writer wrote each question but did not attempt to answer them at the conference. After the conference, the writer used these questions to quide revisions and further writing. It was understood however, that the author was the one in charge and that the suggestions were to be incorporated only if the author saw fit to do so.

The teacher did not ask that all compositions be taken through all stages, but that second drafts and conferences be attempted for each. Goldenrod paper was available for all second drafts and there appeared to be many of these yellow papers in their folders. The students shared the fact that " Mrs. W. won't let us throw anything away. She makes us keep everything - even all our messy drafts."

During these group conferences the teacher circulated among the remainder of students conferencing with

individuals as the need arose. Two aspects of writing which the teacher emphasized in her comments when conferencing individually were that the stories had to be "believable" and that the writing needed to be clear enough that the "reader could visualize what was happening."

The students appeared to write in most areas of the curriculum, as there was evidence of transactional, expressive and poetic writing. Extensive writing had been undertaken in conjunction with a unit on flight, with a novel study, and with a unit on Canadian history.

The Partnerships

General Overview

Initially the two pairs of students began to talk and to write, using tape recorders to record their oral language, at locations in and around the classroom. They worked in the halls, the library, and at the edge of the classroom. Corresponding with the regular writing time of the classroom, it was assumed that this arrangement would not cause a disturbance. Students often shared their work in small groups at the back of the classroom while others

were involved in writing. At any given time students in this classrom were involved in various stages of the writing process. It became apparent however that less noise and distraction was necessary from the point of view of both the classroom teacher and the students within the partnerships. The two pairs of students were thus moved to an empty classroom where they worked together each day during the scheduled writing period. The researcher was present for two of the four writing periods each week enabling the partnerships to emerge without the researcher's presence approximately 50% of the time. Oral language was recorded at each writing session.

The two girls chosen differed in their personalities as suggested in the brief profiles, with Erica being a serious, studious student and Sharon being a boisterous and lively individual. Both girls were able to express themselves well in their writing - Erica's work being more mechanically correct, however. Their first story, which did not receive an official title but which the girls referred to as the "Wellington story", involved a mystery theme, where intense discussions were undertaken concerning each story detail, before the ideas were put to paper. The prewriting session lasted approximately two

weeks with all aspects of the plot worked out and detailed character sketches planned.

Throughout the entire writing of the first draft of this story the girls became involved in many heated discussions and the story was eventually left unfinished. Their second project was intentionally a debate in which Erica stated, "we agreed to disagree so it should be better." This debate centered around the proposed city cat bylaw. The girls were able to maintain their relationship which had become rather strained because of the abundance of arguing. Although their discussion was lengthy, lasting approximately three weeks, their written text involved only a short summary of their opinions and a few lines that they labelled "Further Suggestions".

At this point the girls returned to the "Wellington story" for a short time. When their discussions became so heated that neither girl felt comfortable in the partnership, they decided to work on individual writing projects. The girls continued to sit beside each other and conferenced when needed. This appeared to work very well and the friendship was maintained. In the third writing project the girls decided to work on the topic of wills. While one student dictated a will, the other became the transcriber.

This became a very personal and friendly discussion revolving around their favorite people and possessions.

It appeared that Sharon became the dominant partner in this relationship because of her boisterous and aggressive manner. However Erica's quiet assertiveness was evident in all discussions. Erica's slow, methodical approach to writing - to "get it right" frustrated Sharon whose creative approach was to "get it down", and to revise later. It was Erica who did the actual transcribing in this partnership as Sharon felt she was a weak speller and stated that "Erica is definitely much better at it than I am."

The two boys chosen in this study exhibited a great deal of difference in their personalities, their perspectives towards both life and school and their general self-esteem. Dana was a happy and confident student who was well-liked by peers and teachers because of his sense of humor and his consideration for others. He was an only child who seemed to admire his parents and who often spoke of them with pride. In contrast, Craig found life and school much more difficult and was a rather unhappy and unpredictable student. His self-esteem appeared to be low,

perhaps due to the recent divorce of his parents and to his difficulties in school.

These basic differences between the two boys made the partnership a rather trying experience for Dana while for Craig it was "the best time I've ever had". Dana was an avid writer, whereas Craig found writing very difficult, and it was usually something he did not enjoy. Craig's brash, dominant manner coupled with Dana's consideration and sense of humor caused many difficulties. Their first story, which they called "Spies At Work - Their Everyday Lives", appeared to be based on various violent movies which Craig had seen. In this first writing project, Craig became the more dominant member of the partnership. In essence he was able to bully Dana in a loud and aggressive manner.

In the second writing project, Dana became more assertive and for a short period of time, was able to direct the writing to his own liking. However the boys found it impossible to work together after approximately 8 weeks, due to incessant arguing. They then worked on separate compositions, while meeting to conference and assist each other whenever one of them felt it necessary. Throughout the partnership, it was Craig who did the actual writing,

although he was the slower writer of the two. The two boys worked on two major projects, both based on movies they had seen, but with differing perspectives.

The Partnerships As They Emerged--A Detailed Description

In order to fully understand the partnerships--the strategies used and the relationships which developed, a detailed description of the two partnerships, as they emerged, is given below.

The Girls - Get It Down or Get It Right?

"The Wellington Story"

The two girls began the partnership with a murder-mystery story which they referred to throughout the entire partnership as the "Wellington story". They had no difficulty deciding on their topic or type of story and were immediately involved in detailed planning sessions of the plot and characters. Within the first week they had completed what they called an outline. They discussed events which would take place during one evening at the home of the Wellington family. They discussed motives for murder and specific ways to "frame the maid" in their

story. The following example of their conversation shows their concern for logistics in their prewriting session.

E: OK the husband is a famous painter - he paints a picture of the maid...

S: And the wife is jealous - perfect! - she kills him. Lovely dear husband, you painted a picture of our maid and...

E: She never did like him but married him for his money.

S: Of course! She wants his money--she married him for his money and she kills him for it.

In a discussion concerning methods for "framing the maid, the girls were immediately involved in the story to the extent where they appeared to identify with the characters. Rather than saying 'How are we going to frame the maid as the authors of the story, they asked, "How is she going to frame the maid, meaning the wife. They continue:

E: Ok, meanwhile how is she going to frame the maid?

S: I know, maybe the lady - do we know our names yet? No, well she could knock out the husband

with the wine bottle, then kill him with a knife that the maid was using...

E: Ya, to carve the turkey for the dinner guests.

S: And she puts the painting in the maid's car right, to make it seem like she was hiding it and...

E: Ya, OK, so we got the story - now let's start...

The girls began each writing session with a strategy which involved reading the last sentence from the previous work period. This became their starting point, with ideas flowing easily between them.

E: Ok, last sentence was Mrs.Wellington asked Yvette to go see where her husband was ...

S: easy, and this is where Yvette finds him dead and...

E: What could Mrs. Murphy be talking about when they hear Yvette scream?

In working out details however, where each sentence and at times each word was discussed, disagreements were common and ideas were questioned for their logic. The following, lengthy example shows the girl's concern for clarity. They had difficulty in coming to an agreement as to how this

clarity should best be attained. This discussion concerns the words 'looked closer' and 'looked again'.

E: He looked closer into the hole...

S: He looked again, sounds better.

E: Well Sharon, if you looked closer, would you stick your head right into the hole?

S: It doesn't mean that.

E: Well,it does to me!

S: Closer isn't sticking your face into the hole but looked again just sounds better.

E: Sharon, you don't listen!

S: So, we don't use closer or again--we say he looked into the hole and saw the top of the wine bottle.

E: No, he looked closer - a bit closer - Know what I mean?

S: Why would he look closer to see the wine bottle?

E: 'Cause the dress might have covered it up you know. Then he looked again, doesn't mean he looked closer.

S: Yes it does!

E: Sharon, I don't know--it's the way--the sentence --the way ...

S: The way you put it sounds dumb.

E: Well where did he actually look?

S: under the floorboards

E: Well, I don't think he needs to get closer to see under the floorboards--that's what I really mean.

S: When you say looked closer, it doesn't necessarily mean you looked closely right in the hole - it means you sort of took a second look.

E: Ya, that's it - he took a second look!

S: Oh wow we got it!

E: Phew!

The "Wellington story" was an intense, well-thought out story which appeared to need little editing or revising in the second draft mainly due to Erica's need to "get it right" the first time. It appeared that Sharon became the dominant partner in this relationship - she talked quickly and loudly whereas Erica often sat back and listened intently and then pondered what was said. Erica's slow, methodical approach to the writing - to "get it right" frustrated Sharon, whose creative and vigorous approach was to "get it down", and to return to it later to revise. However, amidst numerous interruptions Erica began to

explain her point of view and was able to have her opinion known through her firm, quiet manner and her refusal to compromise. It was Erica, who did most of the actual writing in this partnership. Sharon was not confident in her spelling, and stated," Erica does a much better job, so why not, right?" The girls saw no reason for both to write or for both to have a written copy as all work was done together.

After working on this story for approximately four weeks the girls decided to leave it unfinished and go on to something different. They had begun to argue a good deal of the time and what had at first been comments of disagreement directly related to the content of the story became personal comments intended to insult. In Sharon's words,

> At first we argued about the story, but not about each other - we didn't argue like you're stupid or anything it was about the writing. Later on I got really mad at Erica - she was so picky about everything, I couldn't stand it and it was hard to write--like if you've just had a big argument it's pretty hard to be real nice and pretend it didn't happen you know.

Although the "Wellington story" was the most difficult to write together, both girls stated that it was their favorite story and the one which they felt was their best.

A Daycare For Cats

Realizing that their relationship was deteriorating the girls decided to work on a debate. They were aware of debates in the House of Commons as they had studied Canada's government and stated that "debates were for disagreements and everybody's opinion", as the following conversation shows.

S: Want to do a debate?

E: Yes, then we each get to have our own opinion.

S: What's yours about?

E: My what?

S: Your issue you want to debate. I want to do the cat bylaw OK?

E: Ok, I'll just put "Cat Bylaw" on the top of the page.

S: Ok, if I was in charge of the world I'd change the cat bylaw.

E: Do you want to do this one - together? I don't have a cat - you do, so it makes a difference

doesn't it?

S: Cats should be able to walk around!

E: And I'm going to write against that! Cats go to the bathroom everywhere and...

S: Good, we disagree then - we agree on that. (laughter)

E: And it smells! Write on top of the page Cat Bylaw again.

S: Why?

E: Because we're going to do it together - we'll put my opinions and your opinions so we know who's is what.

The girls seemed quite relieved that they were again able to work together and enjoyed their discussion of the proposed cat bylaw. Their humor returned and with it the joy of working together toward a common goal. Their differing opinions were put to good use. The moral issues discussed were many and varied. The broader issue of all pet's rights was also discussed. The following discussion concerned the issue of dogs.

E: Dogs do that too you know.

C: But dogs usually have their owners with them. How many people do you see walking their cats?

(laughter)

E: Not always - some people let their dogs loose and they don't come back.

S: Yes they do.

S: Cats always come back to their own yard.

E: Well, it depends on how far they go.

S: Cat's will have a worse bylaw - like they can't even go out of their yard without getting paid [fined] &200.

E: Dogs are supposed to be on a leash you know.

S: Ha! cats are hard to train - you couldn't get a cat on a leash.

E: Hmm, hmm true.

S: Can I just tell you something? That means every time your cat wants to go outside you have to go with him?

E: Ya, I guess.

S: You can't tend to your cat every minute!

In this discussion of the different laws for cats and for dogs, the comments that "Well life's not always fair", seemed to momentarily put a stop to all further discussion. Sharon admitted that if the new law was put

into place her cat would have to go to a farm. She became quite distressed and said:

S: Anyway, my cat's not gonna know about this bylaw is it? So of course she's gonna leave the yard.

Realizing how difficult a solution was, because of the various opinions of people with different interests, the girls added humor to their discussion and raised it to a more philosophical level.

S: The bylaw will stop cats from doing that (wandering all over the streets). We managed to slip by without this stupid bylaw so far, so why have it now?

E: I don't know - I agree both ways .

S: Really Erica - that's pretty good for you!

E: I think - well this is kind of stupid--very stupid.

S: Tell me.

E: What if there's a place where cat's can go--an area or something?

S: How they gonna keep them there? If there was this area, it would be the sleaziest place around

wouldn't it--a waste of land too.

E: I know a daycare for cats! (Laughter)

S: Some of the laws you can live with but this one you really can't cope with it.

The "Cat Bylaw" text (see Appendix D) consisted of a short summary of opinions and a small section entitled "Other Suggestions". The girls coded their summary, keeping track of who suggested each idea by putting their names in the margin beside their respective ideas. Erica stated, "If the name is circled it means that that person suggested it. If the name has a plus sign beside it, it means that they had helped with the idea." They stated why they agreed with the proposed bylaw and also why they disagreed with it. Although the written text appears minimal, the discussion that accompanied it was lengthy and of a high quality.

The girls were pleased with their cat bylaw project and decided to try to complete the "Wellington story". During this second attempt the girl's conversation drifted to other topics but they appeared to have little difficulty returning to their task at hand, as the following discussion of their particular schedules shows.

E: Now Mrs. Wellington says, The strangest thing happened to me yesterday.

S: Do you want to meet tomorrow night?

E: Not tomorrow night--the strangest thing happened to me...

S: We could just talk on the phone. Oh there's skiing Wednesday and the...

E: I have gymnastics from six till eight. After that then I have to go to the library with Tanya.

S: five to six then?

E: OK. The strangest thing happened to me yesterday

S: Then we hear the screaming noises.

E: Then Mrs. Murphy was interrupted by a terrible scream.

The girls worked for approximately two weeks, and again began to grow tired of the story as the following statements show. However they did not argue or disagree as in their former attempt.

E: I want to get to the end of this story.

S: So do I--cause I don't--once we get the first draft done...

E: I still think this is a good story.

S: Me too--I'm just ... tired of it you know.

My Dad Should Get My Eighty Dollars in my Will

The girl's third project involved the writing of wills. Their discussion and writing lasted approximately three weeks. They appeared to enjoy talking about the people they

loved and also about their prized possessions. Their strategy here consisted of one student dictating and one student writing down the will. They seemed to understand how wills were written as the following discussion shows. Erica completed a second draft and eventually published her will and displayed it for all to see. A small portion of the conversation which ensued during the writing of Sharon's "Will" follows.

S: I, Sharon give my money to Erica. I also give my stuffed animals to Elaine. I have a whole garbage bag full of them.

E: Oh die, die quick. (laughter)

S: And my cat goes to ... my mom and my goldfish to my sister and my quilt my grandma made me goes to her--she crocheted it for me. We all get one--then when we get married we get a special one--they have curly things on it--you know there's holes?

E: Who wants all our junk?

S: My dad. He loves junk--he collects junk my mom says. Well my dad gets my gold locket. He gave it to me.

E: OK, now read it to me. What about your desk? I need a desk you know.

S: Erica!

E: Well that would be nice.

The Cat's Revenge or Davie and the Five Cats

The fourth project the girls began to work on was a story which also involved cats. Up to this point, topics and titles did not appear to have been a problem for the girls. However at this point near the end of the study they had difficulty deciding what to write about. They became quite critical of each other and could not seem to accept each other's ideas.

S: You don't want to do very much anymore do you?

E: Well I don't.

S: You don't like the cat bylaw anymore--you don't want to finish the Wellington story...

E: Well...

S: What kind of story do you want to write?

E: Well, I don't know.

S: Everything I say, you don't want to write.

E: I don't know what I want to do!

S: I do!

E: Well, I don't!

S: Erica, that's all you ever say is I don't know!

Although the girls appeared to be tired of the partnership, they verbalized their processes and difficulties much more toward the end of the partnership, making it easier to understand each other's points of view. They had difficulty

with the beginning of this last story. They again discussed each character's person- ality, before beginning the story.

S: I don't know how to start this.

E: Neither do I.

E: Well, we have our choice titles which we can't decide on...

S: Ya but...

E: And we have a bit about the cat's personalities.

S: But I just can't get started into it you know?

E: OK, we have Fluffy, Miss Mew, Mitsy and Freeway...

S: I love Freeway.

E: Mm ya.

In this story each cat's name reflects it's personality. When I questioned the girls about the name Freeway, Sharon explained it by saying:

> Freeway--his real name is Walley. He's an alley cat and he keeps running away on the freeway. Fantastic! Know how we came up with that? Well our neighbors had a dog. He limped all the time so I asked them why. They said he runs out on the freeway all the time but he never gets hurt much or killed, so they called him Freeway. Isn't that great?

The girls devised a new strategy for this last writing project to again help them with their disagreements. Each

student wrote a separate description of each of the cats. The two descriptions were then put together with the best of each girl's ideas being incorporated into one written text. The girl's written summary of the character's names and personalities is included in Appendix F.

The Wellington Story Revisited and Why Me?

At the end of the partnership the girls were involved in writing separate texts but were sitting together and were involved in continual conferences throughout their writing. As Sharon stated:

> We were sitting together and still asking each other questions but we worked on different stories and got help from each other when we needed it.

Erica worked on a mystery story which she realized was very much like the Wellington story. She eventually left this story unfinished and was unhappy with it because as she said "it's so much like the Wellington story. I just can't get it out of my head." Sharon began work on a story about twins which she named "Why Me?".

The Boys - Yes My Suppressor and You're The Greatest!

Spies At Work - Their Everyday Lives

The boys began their partnership in a similar manner to the girls as they were involved in detailed planning sessions prior to the actual writing of their first story. This story, which they called Spies at Work - Their Everyday Lives, became very lengthy and was one of two projects on which they worked together. The boy's partnership was one which involved a great deal of kidding, of joking, of arguing and of serious cooperation. The boys had difficulty beginning to write and deciding on the topics for both their stories. The two themes which predominated however were mysteries and comedies. Interspersed among serious comments in their attempts to begin their first story were comments such as:

C: Dana don't talk so loud--be normal.

D: That's hard for me Craig--you know that. On to the story now--a comedy or a mystery? Comedies have always caught my eye.

In the prewriting session for their first story, the boys spent three weeks discussing each character. Character's names, their personalities and their goals were discussed. A few short points were jotted down for each character by

Craig. (See Appendix F) Therefore much discussion and planning was undertaken before the actual story was written. Upon questioning the students as to whether this detailed planning was a part of their classroom procedures, Dana replied that "no, it seemed natural to do with a partner because you could talk about everything before you started--in fact you have to talk about everything. When you write alone you get started sometimes without even thinking it through you know."

Humor was evident throughout most discussions. Dana was able to intersperse the humor with the more serious tasks at hand.

C: What other characters we gonna have?

D: None!

C: Dana--get serious!

D: I can't Craig you know that. Well we need one normal kid who was, say walking home and he'll be the hero, so put hero in brackets. And how old should he be?

After three weeks of discussion and the writing of brief character descriptions and plot outlines, Dana was anxious to begin the writing of their first story. Craig insisted however that more characters were needed, with little regard for how they were to fit into the story. For Craig, more was better.

D: Craig, I'd like to--no forget it

C: Come on it's on the table let's hear it.

D: Alright - I've got two things to tell you--that, that ,that--I don't think we need any more characters--it's perfect--and I think we should get on with it.

C: I don't. We need more more people--there's got to be lots of people in it.

D: Why Craig?

C: So it'll be really exciting.

As they planned the beginning of the story Craig presented his ideas in such a way that he was almost unaware of Dana's presence. Craig seemed pleased that someone would listen to him and that he was allowed to talk at length. Dana began to interject politely.

D: Craig can I do some talking too please?

C: And that's just how we're going to do it--it's like that sort of story

D: Can I say my ideas, Craig?

C: Yes.

D: Now my idea's going to be uh--as long as yours first of all--Now hmm I'd say it would start off...

C: I think we should do it the way I said it

D: Now did you hear that folks? He wants it his way!

C: Ya, I just told you the whole beginning part.

In this relationship, it was Craig who did the actual writing. He was a slow writer which caused Dana to spend much time simply sitting, waiting for Craig to transcribe what they had decided upon. Dana repeatedly asked Craig if he would like him to write, and each time Craig refused. As the following example shows, Dana seemed to sense that Craig felt important in the transcribing and as in many other instances Dana sacrificed his own needs for those of Craig.

D: Want me to do some writing Craig?

C: No--Callie likes the--I like writing it's fun so... You keep asking that Dana, but if you really want to, well...

D: No Craig, you're happy with it, I know.

C: It's ok if you want to...

D: Naw, you're happy.

C: Thanks Dana--you're the greatest you know.

D: I know--just kidding!

In a decision regarding the title of this first story, the boys seemed able to negotiate easily and ideas flow quickly between them.

D: I think we should call it the Secret Plans of John Demarsh.

C: No that's--I don't like the John Demarsh part.

D: Alright uhh--Spies (loudly and dramatically) at work (softly and with suspence).

C: Oh Dana I love it!

D: What can I say?--What can I say? Add--Their Everyday Lives - right after OK

C: Right on!

As the boys continued to discuss the name for their hero and that of other characters, they constantly returned to their 'name page' which they had made, adding and deleting various bits of information. This form of organization was unique to the partnership writing and was not a strategy which they normally used in their regular classroom writing. In discussing the setting for the story the boys attempted to choose between Edmonton and Vancouver. They felt they needed a setting with a large population, and that because very few novels that they have read were set in Edmonton it would be a good choice.

D: Where should this murder take place?

C: Let's think of a neat place where it took place.

D: How 'bout California?

C: Naw, it's not famous enough and near here.

D: It's gotta have a big population so - Vancouver or Edmonton?

C: OK Van - coov - er (Craig writes slowly)

D: No, wait, I changed my mind - have you ever read any books where it takes place in Edmonton?

C: No, but who cares?

D: I do! It would be neat you know - in our own city

like , Ok the only reason we're writing Edmonton is because hardly any books have been written about here . Well there was a little bit in "Miss Teeny Wonderful" and of course "Bridge To Terabithia".

The boys began to write the story saying:

C: Once upon a story

D: Oh Craig, get real--how 'bout a new sort of thing like--once upon a mystery?

C: Ya what an idea!--Know what we'll do--we'll write it in blood!

D: In red?

C: OK, like you said Dana, Once upon a mystery Callie and Carol

D: Put a comma.

C: Where?

D: After once upon a mystery, otherwise it'll sound like once upon a mystery Callie, and it won't make sense.

C: Makes sense to me Dana--let's drop it--this is just the rough draft you know. OK once upon a mystery Callie and Carol were going to the fair.

D: That's not fair--get it Craig?

C: When they got there ...

Although it would have seemed natural for Dana to have become the more dominant member of the pair because of his excellent ability to express himself orally and in writing, and because of his popularity in the class where most boys admired him and saw him as a leader, it was Craig who became the dominant member of the partnership. In the above conversation, Craig refused to listen to Dana's suggestions about punctuation, saying, "Let's drop it". Dana turned his frustrations into humor, which Craig ignored. Craig became more negative and demanding. Dana's consideration and sensitivity enabled him to allow Craig to become dominant, but Dana often became very bored in the partnership, waiting for Craig to let him speak. As Craig also preferred to do the actual writing Dana was often idle and very restless. At one point when asked by Craig what he thought the title should be, Dana's reply was, "Boring stories with Craig and Dana".

The boys' strategy was similar to the girls' in that they began each writing session by rereading either their last sentence or all of what had been previously written. Throughout the writing of "Spies At Work", Craig continued to dominate the relationship, uttering and writing down his ideas, often with little regard for Dana's opinion. Craig insisted that Dana agree with him and often accused Dana of doing what he himself was actually doing. Dana used the time to sing, to make up rhymes, or to add bits of humor occasionally. Dana became very unhappy with the strategy

they were using which often did not involve him, and with the story which was emerging. He asked:

D: Craig do you want me to help with anything?

C: No just--I have to finish writing this part.

D: Finish what? We aren't even discussing it!

C: My ideas were ...

D: Craig, the beginning's boring. If you want to murder someone you don't say ...

C: That's how all books start off--we're gonna get into the really good stuff later. That's how we said we were gonna start off.

D: No Craig, that's how you said we were gonna start off.

C: We're gonna have a mystery right? Carol's gonna get...

D: I like my beginning better.

C: hit and then Callie gets knocked off fast and...

D: I like my beginning...You haven't even listened to it

C: Dana this is supposed to be a group--like you have to agree...

D: Ya that's exactly how it is Craig. You think I have to agree right?

C: Ya ...so?

D: Ok, could we have a little humor?--How 'bout--Just then out of the blue, green, yellow or red Carol ...

As in many situations Dana dispelled his anger and frustration through the use of his humor and left the issue unresolved.The differences in the boy's backgrounds became evident as Craig and Dana disagreed on what was appropriate language for their story. Craig was influenced by many violent and adult-rated movies such as "Platoon" and "Rambo", whereas Dana was influenced by literature, his theater and travel experiences and his parental support and guidance. The following discussion exemplifies this difference in backgrounds. It is interesting that Craig did not appear to hear Dana's comments, and continued his sentences as though Dana were not present.

C: OK, so let's have the murderer slice Callie's cheek and chop off Carol's head and blood comes pouring out...

D: How 'bout--A man in a black stocking came out of the house and headed in Callie and Carol's direction.

C: ...and he took out a machete

D: Oh don't say that Craig! That's disgusting!

C: one of those big suckers--a big mother--and it's got a handle about a mile long, and the blood, and that'll be the end of the chapter.

D: Enough Craig--get real. This is about as exciting as a heater you know.

C: No and then another page and a half and it'll be the end. It doesn't matter about the idea, it

should be a page and a half and...How do you think we should start off the second chapter Dana?

D: I don't!

Throughout the remainder of this first story the boys spent a great deal of time trying to negotiate and to simply get their ideas on paper. They worked for eight weeks whereupon they decided to begin another story because of difficulties in agreement and in how to continue beyond their third chapter. (See Appendix F for first three chapters written collaboratively.)

Ferris Bueller's Day Off Part II

The boys decided to base their second writing project on a comedy movie which only Dana had seen. In this way, he began to take a more dominant role for a short time. Their decision to do this second version was not immediately agreed upon, but a discussion, which shows the two boys differing perspectives, was undertaken. It also became evident that Dana was becoming more assertive and did not give in to Craig's demands.

D: Let's do a comedy.

C: Let's do a war story.

D: Let's do a comedy.

C: Ok let's do a comedy and a war story.

D: No!

C: Like "Goodmorning Vietman" you know it's a funny war story.

D: Craig how could it be funny if it's war? Get real!

C: There's this guy at the top of the hill...

D: How could it be funny? (under his breath)

C: all the other guys are at the bottom - so the fat boy...

D: Really funny Craig (with sarcasm)

Craig's second suggestion was based on the movie he called "The Two Timer". He suggested that they write a sequel to a movie he had seen, involving a woman who has both a husband and a boyfriend. Craig decided which girl in his class he would like to be the "Two Timer", saying:

C: Hey Dana think of a real foxy lady's name.

D: A what?

C: You know, like Hey babe--like when the guy is necking or like Hot Lips or ...

D: Craig, no way and this time I'm not kidding. That stinks!

Dana rejected Craig's ideas totally and it was finally decided that the Ferris Bueller story would be undertaken. The boys had begun to argue for much of the partnership time. They came up with a temporary strategy, as did the girls, in order to maintain the partnership. They decided to each be one of the characters in the story and in that way

they were able to make the characters do and say what they liked. This strategy did not last long however, as Dana did not agree with Craig's perspective, and he also preferred that the story be based on the original movie as intended. The boys also had difficulty with the writing as they were unsure whether they were writing a story or a play. They decided to interview girls for parts in their story which they were now calling a play. When the girls were asked to take parts in the play they realized that the boys did not have the plot or the dialogue planned out. The girls refused to take part, saying:

> S: No way I'm gonna be in a play where I don't get to see my script beforehand--no way, especially since you're writing it Craig. It'll probably be full of swears and dirty stuff.

The boy's discussion as to which girls would play certain parts deteriorated to a monologue where Craig discussed the girls he liked and disliked in the class. Craig appeared to be very involved in this discussion while Dana remained quiet and was rather uncomfortable. When Dana explained that in the story the character called Cameron did not have a girlfriend, Craig insisted that he must have a girlfriend and a fast car and that he have "Buddies you know, so I can hang around with them and get girls and have car races and fights and stuff." The discussion became very argumentative at this point, with Craig insisting on

ideas which were very much a part of his interests at the moment in his life, and with Dana insisting that he did not want any of this "tough

guy, fights or girl stuff".Their differing perspectives were very evident here and were causing many difficulties in the relationship. The partnership seemed to deteriorate rapidly at this point with Craig complaining that Dana wouldn't listen to him and to his ideas. Dana became quite discouraged and tried to keep the partnership going but with little success. Dana decided to plan a practical joke on Craig at this point, by telling him that he was quitting. This use of humor, once more to relieve stress, was a foreshadowing of events to come.

D: I quit Craig!

C: What's the matter? Why?

D: I'm not kidding--I've had enough--you call all the shots, you don't listen, it's just na na na na na na--I'm going to give this up--it's too much for me.

C: Are you really serious? Dana you're not! You're kidding aren't you? Dana? Dana?

D: I am--I'm serious!

C: No I can see a little smile coming out of your face--right? Dana I knew it--Oh don't you just love it--Dana you're the greatest! (laughter)

An important aspect of the second story is that the boys identified with the characters and possibly envisioned themselves as these characters. In this story Dana insisted that he would be Ferris Bueller. It was the first time in the relationship that he was totally insistent. He stated, "Ferris is a flashy boy who is the idol of all his friends. He is smart and everyone likes him. He has a special neat way of talking too." When Craig asked Dana to explain Cameron's character, Dana said, "Cameron has had a really screwy life. He is always praying for disease and wants to die, so Ferris kind of babies him. Cameron gets talked into things because he doesn't think for himself". Although Craig is concerned about being Cameron he does not reject the story at this point. It is possible that by coincidence these characters were very much the way that these two boys envisioned themselves. It was also a fairly realistic picture of the boys.

The boys again spent a great deal of time sorting out characters and for the next few writing periods, Craig allowed Dana to explain the characters from the original movie. Craig continued to do the writing, with Dana supplying the majority of the ideas. An interesing discussion took place as Dana attempted to explain Ferris Bueller's manner of speaking. Craig did not understand and Dana made four different attempts to explain the concept, the first of which follows.

D: When Ferris is alone, or if he is going to say something, he sort of talks to the audience, like the audience is with him.

C: But he's alone?

D: Ya, he looks at the TV or movie screen, right? and says, "The key to faking out the parents is the clammy hands."

C: I don't get what you mean.

Dana attempts to explain again.

D: OK in the movie he looks right at you.

C: Who?

D: The movie screen--the audience--you--and says like, he goes, "If you had access to a car like this would you give it away or take it back? Neither would I." --Like he sort of talks to you.

C: I don't know what you mean so pick it up, eh. I don't understand!

Dana continues patiently in his third attempt to make Craig understand.

D: OK, What I'm talkin' about is--he was talking to nobody, to the screen and he says, "Well I don't think that was right--did you think that was right? Neither did I."

C: Oh...

D: Get it?

C: Oh geeze!

The final attempt brought understanding:

C: I still don't understand what you mean.

D: Well, you know it's like he's talking to somebody right, and he says, "Bla bla bla--what do you think? So do I", and he does this all the time.

C: Oh I see OK, OK, OK, now I get it. But like how does he say it?

D: He, like talks to the crowd, to the audience...

C: Oh, he talks to them ...

D: as if they were there--Ya!

C: Why didn't you say that?

D: Oh, Craig!

In this discussion Craig listened intently and did not interrupt or become angry with Dana. Dana was also quite intent on having Craig understand this difficult concept.

An interesting discussion ensued when I asked the boys how the movie was rated.

D: Uh, parental guidance--I saw it with my parents you know, and they thought parts of it were quite funny, but a couple parts, well, my mom--my dad and I made her cover her eyes. (laughter)

C: That's nothin'--some of the movies I've seen are like M.

D: M?

C: Ya, for Major.

D: That's 'mature' Craig.

C: I knew that - ya like you gotta be eighteen to see them.

At this point the partnership appeared to break down and Dana admitted that he could no longer work within the partnership. He had a great desire to write on his own although Craig preferred that they remain together and appeared to feel quite abandoned. The boys decided to conference whenever one of them felt the need. Dana set himself up in a corner of the room and began to write furiously, while talking out loud. He was oblivious to the noise in the room and was once again his enthusiastic self. In the partnership he had shown no interest in the writing materials, as Craig had taken care of the binder and tape recorder. Dana now seemed happy to be writing on his own and faithfully brought all his materials each day. He began a mystery story which he called "Edmonton Alert". His ideas seemed to flow as he composed out loud, wrote, and then read it back, his voice full of expression and suspense. He had a number of false starts, talking himself through them, seeming to enjoy himself. He revised, asked himself questions and provided the answers, speaking aloud the entire time.

You Tom--no wait--uhm this is hard--You, Tom--

> can't get this part--I'm going to kill you Tom. Tom was in shock. He--he didn't breath for about thirty seconds. A black widow--naw--a tarantula crawled in (laughter) no--ya--then suddenly a tarantula crawled up Tom's pant leg. Ohhh what would happen after that? He shook his leg--suddenly he started shaking his leg viciously. The tarantula fell out and Ditmar stepped on it. It made a hmm--a squashing--a shooshing--(Dana begins to sing the Diet Coke song followed by the Lone Ranger theme) a squashing sound right.

After the separation of the partners, Craig appeared to be lost and had great difficulty deciding what to write. He decided to finish the "Spies at Work" story which the two partners had previously worked on. Each day he would begin by replaying the recording of the previous four chapters and often seemed unable to start his own writing. When Craig finally attempted the writing, continuing the story, he was unable to extend the characters or the plot. He began to change many of the characters and to add items which Dana felt did not fit into the original story.

Dana's annoyance with Craig's changes indicated that ownership remained for Dana. Craig constantly harassed Dana for conferences until Dana would finally consent to leave his writing and help him. The conferences often reverted back to the original strategy where Craig asked Dana for

ideas and then argued with them. Craig still found it difficult to come up with his own ideas. At this point, Craig suggested that they ask my opinion and Dana tried to make him understand that, as authors, they were in charge of the writing. Craig's style of writing was almost entirely made up of dialogue, similar to that which could be found in the violent type of movie and TV programs he watched. He seemed unable to write narrative links within his story to tie this dialogue together into a written narative. (See Appendix F.)

Although the boys sat in different locations Craig's need to conference much of the time was frustrating for Dana who appeared to be very involved in his own writing. The boys spent two weeks on their separate compositions. Dana worked on his new mystery story called "Edmonton Alert" and Craig attempted to finish "Spies at Work".

The boys talked about being "in partnership" even after they began to write separate stories and to spend part of each session on their own. They seemed to have found a working arrangement that was acceptable to them both, although Craig felt he needed his partner's help much more than did Dana.

CHAPTER 5

TALKING AND WRITING TOGETHER
DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Overview

In this chapter, the analysis of the data is presented according to the major themes which emerged. This thematic analysis follows the detailed description in chapter four, in order to give a more complete understanding of the two partnerships. The first section discusses the students' writing processes--the techniques and strategies used within the two partnerships. Section two examines the relationships which were established as a result of the partnerships. Section three discusses the restructured partnerships. The fourth section deals with the students' perceptions of partnership writing. Expressive language is discussed in section five. Finally, a comparison between the two partnerships is presented.

The Writing Strategies

Acknowledging the varying factors of the two partnerships, certain patterns were evident regarding the strategies which the students used and the relationships which ensued. In this study, the term strategy refers to 'how the students worked'. The term relationship refers to 'how the students worked together'. Thus a description of the strategies is also a description of the relationships.

Although these two aspects of the partnerships are dealt with in separate sections, they are interrelated and mutually supportive. Although the two concepts are difficult to describe individually, it is the researcher's purpose to do so only for the sake of clarity and ease in understanding.

The students appeared to use three general phases in the process of writing: 1) prewriting in the form of planning or direction setting, 2) writing and conferencing and 3) postwriting. These phases were similar to the rehearsal, drafting, revising and editing phases identified by Donald Murray, (1984), and to the more general phases of prewriting, composing and postwriting used by Donald Graves (1975).

The Prewriting Stage--Planning or Direction Setting

The students developed a number of strategies which were unique to the partnership format. One of these unique strategies was the emphasis placed by the students on the prewriting stage of the writing process. This stage appeared to become a most significant and time-consuming aspect of the writing and one which appeared to be as important to the students as the actual drafting of the stories. For them it <u>was</u> the actual drafting and they did not seem to differentiate between phases. This emphasis on this prewriting stage was a result of the opportunity to explore and talk through ideas with an interested partner Although

this stage may not be prominant within classroom writing programs, it is one which is believed to be vital to the writing process.

Extensive discussions and written summaries regarding character personalities and plot lines were undertaken.(See Appendix F.) In addition, there was a great deal of discussion on title choice and character names, before written compositions were begun. These summaries were not considered complete by the students as they often returned to them to make additions or deletions. This extensive planning, although not a large part of the student's classroom writing experience, but evident in both partnerships, came about due to the opportunity for extensive interaction which the partnership offered.

The following extracts from the prewriting discussions of each partnership are illustrative of these planning sessions. The students' written summaries are also included.

Prewriting Discussion Regarding Titles--Girls

In the following discussion, Erica and Sharon attempted to decide on a title for their story about cats. They appeared to enjoy the conversation and offered suggestions interchangeably. Although this discussion took place toward the end of the partnership, and was one of the last collaborative stories composed, it exemplifies other discussions held throughout the partnership. The story was

eventually left unfinished although all aspects were planned.

E: OK, why don't you put "Choice Titles" and then we can put all the choice titles?

S: Cat's Revenge

E: Cats Strike Back (laughter)

S: The Cat Story

E: I think in this one we should have chapters - because it sounds like a story if there's chapters.

S: So chapter one is ...

E: Chapter two is the newspaper - that's when they find it.

S: Cats Count Too - good title.

E: Well, city hall would just kill the cats.

S: I know, Cats and People.

E: I know, City Hall and the Thundering Cats.

S: No, no - Sally and the Cats.

E: No, a boy who helps cats in alleys, and they find the boy.

C: Scavenger cats come out - ya! - kind of like care cats. Ya, Care Cats!

E: That sounds like a little kid's book though.

C: It's an adult book. You can tell right away by looking at the cover.

E: Ya! - The Care Cats - colored by us.

C: How 'bout Davie and the Seven Cats?

E: That sounds like the Seven Dwarves.

S: So we've got - Erica read the list now.

E: Ok, these are our choices of titles. Some aren't really great but... The two I like are Cat's Revenge and Cats Stikes Back, 'cause you know like the "Empire Strikes Back". What ones do you like?

S: Davie and the Five Cats

E: I should have known. (laughter)

Prewriting Discussion Regarding Plot--Girls

The following discussion illustrates how the two girls were able to expand upon each others' ideas. Each had a captive listener. Sharon was very excited here and began to develop the idea of writing the story from the cat's point of view. Although Erica did not disagree at this stage in the discussion, she stated that she was against this style of writing where animals are given human qualities and are able to talk. She explained this to Sharon in a later discussion.

S: Let's make them alley cats.

E: How 'bout some house cats who meet up with alley cats?

S: Ya! They meet in an alley every night. We tell about how they all meet together each night and have meetings.

E: So it's actually like a cat gang.

S: Ya, it's a club where all the cats in the neighborhood

get together.

E: or the most popular cats...

S: in a secret alley on the north side of the neighborhood. The cat club meets again in the alley. The cat club is a - la la la la. We make it from the - the leader is telling the story like - I'm the leader of the pack and I'm going to tell you our story. Like the leader introduces the cats in the first part and then you get into the story - the action. Like he goes, Freeway is an orange cat who always runs on the freeway and that's sort of the introduction and then you get into the story.

E: Well, OK, chapter one - the cats!

S: Oh, cute Erica.

E: Well it would be good, cause we always get confused.

Prewriting Discussion Regarding Characters--Girls

S: Ok we should have about five cats - Fluffy, Marvin,

E: No, one cat has to be dumb so it needs a dumb name.

S: Ya, one of them dumb cats like in the Archie comics. What else? - Fluffy, Ricardo, Junior - We should have a rich cat like "Oh I'm not going in that alley. That's beneath me." (imitation of a whining voice)

E: Puffy!

S: mmm?

E: Well, put that down anyway. Miss Mew!

S: Ok so we should have five cats - three boys and two

girls.

E: Miss Mew!

S: OK we need a rich cat's name, a smart one, a dumb one, a ... Fluffy's the dumb one.

E: No Fluffy's too nice - she should be the rich one. What's your cat's name?

S: Freeway!

E: Oh yeh!

S: How did he get that name?

E: We got the idea from our old neighbor-he had a cat named Freeway 'cause he ran out on the freeway a lot and he limped. So our cat's name is Walley but we named him Freeway.

S: Fluffy should be the regular cat.

E: No Misty!

S: No maybe Miss Mew! Freeway could be fat and dumb and lazy and...

E: That's putting too much character in him. He has too many things in him. If we say Freeway is all those, what kinds of personalities can the others have... especially if we say he's fat?

S: Erica, fat doesn't put character in a cat.

E: Of course it does!

S: Back to the really smart cat - back to the really lazy one - he falls asleep at the meetings Yeh!

E: I can see Freeway as a fat goat - OK, I picture him as a lazy cat who is pretty stupid too.

The girls used a strategy in this discussion which their classroom teacher had stressed. They attempted to visualize the concept they were struggling with. Their phrases "I can see" and "I can picture" helped them to externalize their inner thoughts in order to make them clearer for themselves and for their readers.

Prewriting Discussion Regarding Story Lead--Girls

The disagreement which follows concerns the style in which the cat story was to have been written. Erica, who had a very matter-of-fact personality, did not wish to have the animals in the story take on the human quality of being able to talk. This discussion marked the beginning of a disagreement which eventually caused the two girls to abandon the existing partnership, and to form their own, restructured partnership.

S: OK, the cats met again that evening and ...

E: Sharon, you can't have 'again' if you haven't started the story yet - sounds like they already started!

S: Well they did, but we're starting at one of their meetings.

E: It doesn't sound right. I don't think it makes sense. It sounds like they met in the morning and this was the evening--know what I mean?

S: No! How 'bout they met again or they met each evening in an alley on the north side of the

neighborhood. All the popular cats would meet on the north side and I'm the leader of the cats.

E: Sharon, Sharon--I don't really like the idea of cats talking--like them telling the story

S: How 'bout just in the introduction then?

Because of the extensive story planning where aspects of plot and characterizations were 'worked through together' the compositions appeared to be of high quality with regard to their content. The ideas were complex, clear and usually quite believable in the first draft stage. Sharon and the two boys did not appear to worry about the mechanics of their writing at this first draft stage. Sharon's statements reflect this lack of concern during this prewriting stage.

S: Well, just get it down, and we'll come back later and fix it up for spelling and stuff. It doesn't really matter you know. We can fix it up in our second draft, if we do a second draft of this one. I don't care right now--I just want to get the ideas down first. If I think about spelling I forget my ideas you know and the sentences--well when I read it out I can get that figured out. I wonder if we can still use our class editors for this? What do you think Sharon?

Prewriting Discussion Regarding Titles--Boys

The boys were very excited by the title for their first story. This discussion, at the beginning of the partnership, illustrates the beginnings of reciprocity in their relationship.

C: How do you think we should call it? Call it Hold The Red, rated R? Hey, you can make the name.

D: How about AVX 60?

C: What?

D: AVX 60. It could be a secret weapon.

C: Ya, but then nobody would understand it.

D: Ya, but it would be the cover--AVX 60 by Dana and Craig.

C: Naw, we gotta think of a normal name that every--body understands for starters. We gotta think of a title.

D: The Secret Plans of John Demarsh.

C: No that's the name of a guy. We gotta have a title name like...it has to be an exciting name, not just a guy's name. I like the spy part but not the John Demarsh part.

D: That's it--you hit on it--Spies (said very loudly and with suspense in the voice), At Work (said softly and mysteriously)

C: Spies At Work, what an awsome idea!

D: What can I say? What can I say? Ha! You should put

in little words--Their Everyday Jobs.

C: I think that's a good title.

Prewriting Discussions Regarding Plot--Boys

The boys' initial excitement about working together in a partnership is reflected in the following discussion. Craig's concerns lie with the number of pages, the chapters and the use of pictures. Dana is interested in the content of the story and the title. The difference in the boy's backgrounds became evident very early in the partnership, as this prewriting discussion of the first story shows. Dana reprimanded Craig for using "coarse language" and made it clear that he did not intend to write a romance story. It is also evident that Craig appeared to idolize Dana.

C: What do you think we should have--a kidnap or a murder?

D: A murder--a tragic death!

C: No, like the Hardy Boys book I'm reading right now. They got mugged mugged mugged mugged mugged!

D: We shouldn't have like there was a normal boy who was walking home and he got murdered. (makes his voice very boring)

C: OK, OK I get your point. We're not going to have a chapter book are we, with hundreds of pages? We're just gonna like have a book like we usually do aren't we?

D: But the first part of the book should be the main characters.

C: I gotta a better idea. The boy likes the girl but the girl thinks he sucks.

D: Craig! That's coarse language!

D: I think an adventure in babysitting is better except that sort of thing's already been done you know. No offence, but are the boy and girl sort of gonna uhm get into a relationship?

C: Ya ya! (This thought strongly appeals to him).

D: and then it's all happy ending and they get married at fourteen? Sure, sure.

C: So this is going to be a chapter book with hardly any pictures right?

D: A novel--sort of a novel

C: What about fifteen or twenty pages?

D: Whatever

C: and about two or three chapters?

C: Ya ya ya

D: Oh, Dana, I like you.

D: I'm a likeable sort of guy.

C: This'll be a junior novel (very excited)

D: very junior!

C: I like your ideas.

D: Well thank you very much. I like yours. Enough of this nice talk.

C: What else is gonna happen?

D: We got it. We got everything we need. We got the names. Where's it gonna take place?

C: The fair right? So how's it gonna happen - the murder--a sudden death right on the spot?

Prewriting Discussion Regarding Characters--Boys

D: Well we should have a normal kid--a girl--or anybody.

C: We gotta make up a guy who's a mugger, so there's gonna be a mugger, so I'll put down mugger. What other characters we gonna have?

D: none!

C: Dana come on, get serious.

D: Well of course we have to have the hero!

C: Like who's that gonna be?

D: I don't know--some boy named...

C: Craig (laughter)

D: Just a boy. And he'll be the hero so put 'hero' in brackets. We need uh, uh, mother and a father. Oh, how old should this boy be?

C: A teenager, cause then we can have a boy and a girl and they can you know--get it on like...

D: No way Craig. I told you I'm not getting into that boy/girl stuff. My life is complicated enough!

C: So we need characters at the school part--like just 'others'.

D: You can't just say 'others'. You have to make up

the characters.

C: OK, like two boys and two girls.

D: We should think of the boy's name. Gordon?

C: Naw--well that's a good enough first name but you wanna get it neater you know like...

D: How 'bout Frank?

C: Sounds like an old guy. How 'bout Jo?

D: How 'bout Bobby Jo Peterson?

C: No!

D: Peterson? That's a nice last name!

C: Ya, OK, but we need the first name.

D: OK, something something Peterson

D: How 'bout Dana Peterson? How bout Dana Peterson? Oh I got a better idea ! (shouting) He has a sidekick like you know Dana Peterson AND bla bla bla!

C: OK, our heros then are Dana Peterson and Craig Peterson.

D: They can't be related, then the story goes all boring and they get into family stuff and eh-- I read stuff like that they're ...(sighs) So Dana Peterson and--What's your middle name? (whispered)

C: Walter

D: Walter something--I like that. Walter Reagon no

C: Think of a neat last name--it has to be neat.

D: Neat, not sort of middle, cause you can't have Walter Starborn--sounds like a Jetson's name.

C: I can't think of anything. My brain's not thinking

D: Well mine's thinking today but it's just--it's not on that particular name you know. You're more used to writing the story.

C: Right. This is hard. Help, Walter what?

D: I hate that when it doesn't click on you. Walter McGlaughlin.

C: Naw, I don't like that

D: Walter McConnally?

C: Naw, think of something like Peterson. What's your last name?

D: You know that! Long, of course.

C: I mean your middle.

D: Gor-don (done in funny accent)

C: Walter Gordon yuck!

D: Walter Billings. That's stupid. Walter Michaels. I, I, I always hated the name Michaels. You know Mike or Michael but not Michaels.

C: Hunchak?

D: Lewis? Walter Lewis? Walter McKay?

C: Ya, oh man that's cool. Walter McKay.

D: What can I say? Well I am cool.

C: And the mom and dad's name can be Mr. and Mrs. [redacted]n.

D: That was easy. OK so we got Dana and Walter and Mr. and Mrs. Peterson.

C: For the 'others' let's use people's names in our classroom.

D: No, I don't want to use real people's names. McKay, well that's even bad because we know...

C: Ya, but we need names--we can't help it.

D: OK, so the mugger's name can be Wolfgang

C: NO! I don't want to use my dad's name.

D: See--get my point?

C: Ya, let's just get on with it.

D: Ok, so the mugger's name 's gonna be Fred, Pete or Jo?

C: Jo. And what's his code name gonna be?

D: Bloody Finger--I don't know.

C: So who's gonna get killed? What's her name gonna be? Carol?

D: Ya, that's Carol--the normal girl. OK let's get started cause we got our characters--our people and our setting and our plot. Let's go man!

Dana's creativity was evident in this discussion regarding characters for the 'Spies at Work' story, as was Craig's constant interest in male/female relationships. Craig again tried to steer the topic toward these relationships. When Dana commented that his "life is already complicated enough", he was referring to the fact that he is a very popular student. He tried very hard to be fair to all his classmates when they all asked to work with him. His humor, his creativity, and his good nature made him an appealing partner. In their discussion of names, the boys made many attempts and false starts, suddenly discovering one which

appealed to them both. When Craig preferred to use classmate's names, Dana disapproved. He convinced Craig by turning the tables, suggesting that they use the name of his father. Craig was strongly opposed and Dana had cleverly made his point.

Prewriting Discussion Regarding Story Lead--Boys

C: OK, we got the name page done - Ok, we gotta think. We got a whole page of names--the characters are done. Now we just have to think how we're gonna write this sucker.

D: Craig!

C: OK, we gotta start at the fair right? What are we gonna start with? Cally and Carol are going to the fair right? Once upon a story...

D: No let's make up a new sort of thing. How 'bout Once upon a mystery?

C: Ya, what an idea.

D: I know, I made it up.

C: Know what we'll do--we'll write it in blood.

D: Ya, in red.

The boys were ready to begin writing the story on paper and at this point were quite excited.

The following excerpt from my observational notes, summarizes the importance of this prewriting phase. These thoughts were written as I watched the four students begin

to work on the actual composition of their stories, after the completion of four weeks of prewriting discussions and written outlines.

> Dana and Craig seem quite happy today. They have had some minor disagreements but nothing they haven't been able to sort out with Dana's humor and patience. Craig still wants to talk about boy/girl relations, but Dana isn't interested. They are just now beginning to start writing the story after 4 weeks of planning. The girls too are ready to begin writing their story. They have worked hard at getting every detail sorted out before beginning the actual writing. I am surprised that both groups have done such extensive planning. Is it due to the relationship, the time, the lack of restrictions? (Journal entry, March 28, 1988)

Writing and Conferencing--The Heart of Partnership Writing

The partnership writing concept was based on a cooperative relationship where the students were free to interact orally throughout all stages of the writing process. Because of the interactive nature of the process of writing when in a partnership, conferencing became a natural and continual process, rather than a technique used at the revision or editing stages of writing. Yeske's (1984) definition of a conference which is used to denote a "one-to-one discussion

between a teacher and a student concerning some aspect of the child's involvement in the writing process" (p.3) has been extended here to include a one-to-one discussion between two students. It became difficult to segment the writing process into stages which could easily be defined or described.

In essence, these students and their partners were in a state of continual conferencing and were continually shifting between phases. Thus they were involved in a cyclical process of drafting, revision and editing, (Murray, 1984) at all times. In contrast to the research of Sondra Perl, (1979), who found that the stages of writing appeared in a sequential, recognizable pattern, these stages became melded together in a unique type of recurrent process. Although solitary writers also follow a cyclical process, shifting between stages, there was a great deal of evidence of this in the partnerships due to the continual interaction between the students. As the students wrote together, in their partnerships, they were continually engaged in conversations intended to clarify, to extend, and to sort out ideas. Thus they were conferencing at all times and at all stages of the writing. The type of conference within each partnership was dependent upon the particular piece of writing being discussed and upon the two partners involved. The following sections discuss conferences with respect to revision, morale and editing. In addition, self--initiated

group conferences and spontaneous mini conferences are discussed.

Conferences as Revision

Often the conference stage in writing is that point at which a solitary writer seeks another's opinion or assistance, usually after a first draft or a partial first draft is completed. In a classroom situation, where writers may be at various stages at any particular time, conferences may have to be scheduled or pre-arranged. In the partnership situation, there was no need for conferences to be arranged according to a schedule. As the two students wrote, they were continually 'conferencing', continually sorting through their ideas, through the natural flow of their interactions. For this reason, there appeared to be few content revisions needed after first drafts in the partnership. In both partnerships however, structural revisions, or editing was rarely undertaken. The students considered their writing to be "rough draft" where "spelling doesn't really matter". With reference to structural revisions, they stated," We'll do it later, on second draft or take it to class editors." This rough draft writing appeared to be very evident in the partnership project, and three of the four students wrote in this manner. Erica was the exception to this, however. Because Erica was a very precise student, she preferred that her writing be as correct as possible, whether it was a first or a second draft. She stated:

> "I like to try to get it right the first time. It's Ok for me to think of spelling and the sentence even if I'm also thinking of the ideas of it. Sharon says she can't do that - that she loses her ideas if she thinks of spelling and sentences, but for me it's OK. I think about it hard in my head, before I put it down."

Revision, then in the partnerships, was almost exclusively in the form of content--in how ideas were to be best articulated--and was undertaken throughout the entire writing process. In addition to this, the majority of the partnership writing appeared to remain in the first draft stage, unlike the classroom writing, where second drafts were attempted for most compositions and publishing was periodically undertaken. These first drafts appeared to be clear and logical due to the constant content revision throughout. Unlike the regular classroom however, no specific deadlines or restrictions were insisted upon in this study. The students were responsible for setting up their own partnership writing program. Interaction regarding the conventions of writing were rare. The following example, however, shows one such instance where these mechanical aspects were discussed.

In the following discussion, Dana was concerned that unless Craig used a comma, the passage would be misunderstood. In

his last statement he asked Craig to trust his judgment and to accept the fact that he was correct.

Craig: Once upon a mystery Callie and Carol...

Dana: What if somebody goes, Once upon a mystery Callie?

Craig: What if they do?

Dana: Don't you see? It should be, Once upon a mystery - then pause. So put a comma.

Craig: a period then

Dana: Trust me, it's a commma.

A more general discussion occured between Sharon and Erica with regard to quotation marks. Sharon had spoken to me regarding her inability to use this form of punctuation mark and the fact that Erica was able to help her with this. The subject of quotation marks came about naturally, as the students developed and expanded their writing abilities through the supportive partnership relationship. Sharon's skill level was raised as Erica sought to teach her how to use these quotation marks. In this instance, the partnership facilitated the development of one of the mechanical skills involved in writing. Had Sharon been writing on her own, it is possible that she may not have learned to use quotation marks at all, or perhaps not until she worked with her teacher in a later conference. Her partner was there, with her, at the moment she needed help.

Conferences and Morale

The students talked about their experiences writing alone and writing together with a partner. Two of the four students preferred to be able to 'conference' at any time in their writing and felt that talking their ideas through was helpful to them. Craig talked about the fact that revision, "changing things", was very difficult for him, "expecially when I've got it all done. I hate going back from the very beginning and trying to change it all the way through. It's just really hard for me." Sharon also found it difficult to make changes after conferences because as she said, "I get it all done and then after the conference I sometimes feel like I want to just throw it away 'cause I have to make the changes from the beginning you know and it's so hard to make it make sense when you change it and..." Thus the partnership enabled the students to clarify details and story lines as the writing progressed, rather than after the written. In this way in their partnership writing, as Sharon states, " We had to make sense all the way through with the partner and it was easier most times."

Conferences Regarding Editing

In this study, editing refers to structural revisions, some of which are spelling, punctuation and paragraphing. The students in this study engaged in little editing. They did very few second drafts within the partnership. Dana and

Erica did however both work on second drafts at home, on compositions which they were writing outside of the partnership. Although Erica returned to the classroom at one point in the study, to bring goldenrod paper for second drafts, the students appeared to show little interest in this. In their classroom, they had been requested to do second drafts of most compositions and there was evidence of these second draft compositions throughout their writing folders. The students questioned me as to whether or not they could use their class editors. My response was that it was up to them to schedule it. Craig explained his view of the function of class editors as he said: "Well we get editors to do ours in class - you sit down in front of them and they just - whoosh - do it all." This explanation was one which caused concern for the classroom teacher as she stated that the "class editors are not supposed to just do it all - the two students are supposed to go over it together. Some do a good job together and others let the editors do it for them. I have concerns with using class editors, and need to work this out in my own mind." Erica however was a class editor and often worked with her peers. She stated that, "No, we do it together. Mrs. W. says we have to, so both of us will learn from it. When I do it with someone, we do it together. I make them watch." No meetings with class editors appeared to have been scheduled. Within the partnerships the students appeared to show little concern for published copies of their writing.

Self-Initiated Group Conferences--Collaborative Learning at its best

The students initiated and carried out group conferences, involving all four students. These group conferences were modelled on classroom conferences which they referred to as "author's circle". They seemed to understand and follow the routine from their classroom writing program. Within this program, the students had usually undertaken writing tasks alone. Then at a particular stage, they had requested a conference with their teacher. Because of the large numbers of students, the teacher stated: " I find it hard to keep up with the conferencing. I do feel it's important to get to these kids when they need you, during the process, but I also feel it's important to teach the students to help themselves. If it's process we're teaching we need to help them with this process." Conferencing individually, with all students as their needs arise, is in essence an individualized writing program. Because of the large numbers and because the classroom teacher felt that students were able to take a large part of the responsibility for their writing, the group conference was initiated, taught and practiced. The format consisted of a reading of the work to be discussed, followed by positive responses to the composition and finally by questions related to the content of the story.

Students were very familiar with this response/questioning format and Dana explained it to me in his own words this way:

> First we read our story. Then each person in the group tells a favorite part. Then we each get to ask some questions if we didn't understand a certain part. The one who belongs to the story, writes these questions down, but doesn't answer them now. After all the questions the story guy--you know--it's his story--he goes back to his desk and tries to figure out if he will change anything--like if the questions give him ideas for things he needs to change. We don't have to change things because we are the author but...

The students appeared to be very successful in handling the group conferences without adult participation. They were secure and confident with the procedures. It appeared that this was collaborative learning at its best; there was no arguing, no shouting, no need for constant compromise. They also seemed to be very proud of themselves in this undertaking. Sharon expressed this as she explained:

> Well, we all know what to do and we're pretty good at it. It's the only time I don't get interrupted you know. It's great. We get to read our story. I love doing that and of course you should know that Dana would read his

stuff all day if he could. And then people get to ask us what we meant by some things. It really helps and it's fun and then we go back and work on it some more with the people's questions.

The following group conference was initiated and conducted entirely by the students. They were in complete control of the situation, relying on the strategies which they had been taught in their classroom and which they carried over into the partnership writing. They used these group conferences to further their own writing development and that of their peers. The following example illustrates how children can become teachers and learners within their writing sessions.

E: Ok I'm going to read our story.
S: Well actually we'll read it together. I'll read some too. We don't have a title for it yet so we just call it the Wellington Story.

It is Erica who reads the unfinished story as follows:

The Wellington Story

"Hi, I'm home. Yvette have you started dinner yet",called Mrs. Margaret Wellington from down the hall.

"Yes, Mrs. wellington. Dinner will be served shortly", replied Yvette. Mrs. Wellington walked into the kitchen and dropped two packages on the dining room table. "The guests should be arriving soon. I'll go put my new dress on my bed

for the upstairs maid to iron and then take these paints to my husband", said Mrs. Wellington and went upstairs. Later that evening, Mrs. Wellington came downstairs to help Yvette with dinner. Just then Mr. Wellington came downstairs.

"I'll be out in the painthouse while you girls fix up dinner", he said and left. Mrs. Wellington placed a bowl of cranberry sauce on the dining room table. Then she leaned over the bowl of cranberry sauce and put a candle on the centre of the dining room table. "There," she said with a sigh. Just then the doorbell rang. "Yvette, could you get the door please?", asked Mrs. Wellington. Yvette went to answer the door.

"Good evening, Miss Murphy," said Yvette. "May I take your coat?" Miss Murphy handed Yvette her coat and went into the lounge. After everybody arrived they all sat down for dinner. "Cheers to Mrs. Wellington for having this party." said Mrs. Murphy in a loud voice. Then they all lifted their glasses and clinked them together.

"I'll go get my husband for dinner," said Mrs. Wellington and left. A few minutes later, Mrs. Wellington came back into the dining room. "My husband will be coming shortly" she said as Yvette started carving the turkey. After about ten minutes had passed, Mrs. Wellington asked Yvette to go see where her husband was. Yvette left the dining room and went to the paint house. There was a moment of silence and then Miss Murphy spoke. "The strangest thing happened to me

yesterday" she said. ".....Ahhhhh". Mrs. Murphy was interrupted by a loud scream. Mrs. Wellington dropped her fork.

"It's coming from the paint house" said Mr. McGregor. They all rushed out to the paint house and saw Yvette shaking, with a knife in her hand.

S: That's as far as we got.

C: I have a question. Who's Yvette?

E: the maid

C: What's her husband's name?

E: the maid? She doesn't have one.

D: No Craig, It's Mr.and Mrs. Wellington.

C: Oh, right.

D: All of a sudden you brought in that Mr.McGregor. Who's he supposed to be?

S: one of the guests. When it says--well we didn't want to just list them all.

D: You could say Mr. McGregor, one of the guests

E: good idea.

D: Where do you guys go from here?

S: Well, we're not sure. We have to have the loose floorboards so the police can find the ...

E: We also think we want it to be a play and we talked about highlighting the speaking parts except Sharon wants to write it all out so...

D: Hey you guys we forgot to say our favorite parts. The part about the paint house really catches my eye. Is this guy a painter--a famous one?

E: Ya and that's why Yvette kills him because he painted a picture of her and she is afraid that Mrs. Wellington will find out.

D: Wouldn't it just be easier to destroy the painting than to kill the guy?

S: Well another idea we had is that it's not Yvette. It's the wife and she kills him for his money. We aren't exactly sure about that part yet--like who did it.

C: I like the part where they find her holding the bloody knife.

E: We didn't say it was bloody.

C: Well it would be you know.

Spontaneous Mini-Conferences

At times when the students within one of the partnerships experienced difficulties with clarification of ideas, they sought the help of the students in the other partnership. This was not in the form of a scheduled group conference but rather was a spontaneous plea for help, as the following example shows.

S: We need your help for a second.

D: We're not stopping.

S: Please, we can't figure it out by ourselves.

D: Just kidding. Go ahead. (laughter)

S: "It's coming from the painthouse." Mr. McGregor said. They all rushed into the painthouse and saw Yvette shaking with a knife in her hand. Mrs. Wellington gasped. Uhm... now does that sound like she's in the painthouse or is she outside of it--like just in the doorway? what do you picture in your mind? Is she in or out?

C: She's in the painthouse and these guys are going to come and...

E: Ya see!

D: To me--it sounds like--'cause it said they rushed out to the painthouse--out to the painthouse...

C: You should say then they opened the door.

D: How could they cause I thought they just walked in and saw her husband lying on the floor dead.

C: How could they get in without you telling them?

E: Well they just walked in.

D: Then say they just walked in.

S: Ya, well, Ok.

D: They walked into the painthouse. Just say that. It's that easy. Now can we get on with our lives? (Dana begins to sing the theme song from the television soap opera called "Days of Our Lives".

S: Right. Thanks!

In both these conferences the questions asked seem to be with regard to clarity of content. These questions suggested

non-evaluative feedback which is essential to the growth of a writer and is useful as a starting point for further drafting and revision. Stated more clearly, "Talking about a piece of written work before putting pen to paper, or even during writing enables pupils to test out their ideas for accuracy, for general acceptance and for credibility before they attain that feeling of finality by being written." (Learning through talking 11-16, Schools council working paper # 64, p.72) In these conferences, both the talking and the writing are used as forms of 'rough draft learning', and are the heart of the partnership writing.

The Postwriting Stage

The postwriting phase has been referred to as "all behavior following the completion of the writing... [such as] product disposition, approval solicitation, material disposition, proofreading and contemplation of finished product." (Stacey, 1978, p.39) In contrast to the prewriting phase, the students appeared to show little interest in this phase of the writing. This may have been due to the fact that no specific expectations or guidelines were set forth during the study. With the majority of their writing, the students did not share or reflect upon their completed compositions, perhaps due to the fact that through conferencing, they had already shared them with their partners and with the other pair of students throughout the entire writing process. In addition, the larger audience of the classroom was a missing

element in the partnerships. Upon completion of the compositions, or upon the decision to leave a composition unfinished and to return to it at a later date, the written texts were left in the students' folders and shared only with myself.

The Author's Celebration and Contest--Competition and Composition

Near the completion of the study, the classroom teacher spoke to the students about a school-wide Writing Celebration and Contest. The celebration aspect was to take place in April, with published authors invited to speak during morning sessions and with school authors gathering in the afternoon in cross grade groups to share their own writing. The second aspect involved a writing contest. All interested students were invited to submit a school published composition which would then be judged according to the categories of "Best-written Book, Best Illustrated Book and Best All-Round Book". Students from all grade levels were invited to compete. The students in the partnerships shared their thoughts about the contest.

S: I don't like competition --I just don't--no way I'm going to enter!

E: Well, I'm going to try. I'll see--maybe I will.

D: I love it! You bet I'll try. This is for me man!

C: No way. I'd never be good enough. Everybody knows that. You must be kidding.

The mixed reactions of these students showed their range of feelings with regard to competition and writing. While the contest added an element of excitement and incentive for some students, it also added an element of competition for others. Two of the students decided to enter the contest. Dana and Erica were highly motivated students who appeared to be very successful at most school-related tasks. For them, the contest entailed no risks - only excitement. Craig however showed no interest. To him this was a high-risk situation and one to be avoided. Sharon's statement that she did not feel comfortable with competitions may have been due to the fact that she seemed to be in constant competition with her older sister. While Dana and Erica worked on the contest entries, the other two students attempted to complete the unfinished partnership stories .

The implications of the competitive aspect of the contest gradually began to surface among the four students. They became very concerned about origination and use of particular ideas as evidenced in Erica's statement that "You're stealing my ideas and using them for your story, for the contest. You heard me talking about them and now you're using them and that's not fair at all." Up until this time, in the partnerships, there had been little or no concern as

to who originated or used particular ideas. Once this competitive aspect was introduced, these accusations were often heard. Dana's comment to me that " Ideas were floating around and some were going to publish others' ideas--I can just tell", sums up these effects.

Another change which the contest stimulated was discussion regarding editing and publishing. Up to this point in the partnerships, there had been no discussion as to whether or not any of the compositions would be published. Dana and Erica now began to talk about taking their entries to the class editors and to their teacher, in order to edit them and prepare them for publication. They also began setting deadlines for themselves. Suddenly these phrases became evident: "I need to get this edited before next Monday, guess I better do it at home", (Dana) and "I've already taken it to the class editors and Mrs. W. has seen it so I just need to do my good copy and take it to be published". (Erica)

The stages of their writing process appeared to become much more linear as these two students wrote their first drafts, conferenced with their partners, revised, wrote their second drafts, worked with the class editor in class time, and finally submitted their composition to their teacher for final approval. Erica and Dana worked on contest entries (see Appendix F) both in class time and in the parntership writing time. Where previously partnership writing had been

viewed as a separate entity from the rest of the classroom activities, there now appeared to be a great deal of carryover for these two students. For Erica and Dana, who were competent writers, the contest may have added elements of incentive, excitement and a purpose for their writing, elements which may not have been present for them in the partnerships. However the contest also added an element of competition, with which the other two students were not comfortable.

The Relationships

In this section, the relationships which developed as a result of the partnerships will be discussed. This discussion of the student's relationships will be considered by examining the supportive behavior, the tensions and conflicts, the dominance within the partnerships, and finally the personal backgrounds of the students and how this affected the relationships.

Throughout the partnerships, the students exhibited a great deal of supportive behavior. There was abundant evidence of excitement, pleasure and confidence. In addition, the students also experienced many tensions and conflicts which resulted in partnership "break-ups" (Craig) and eventually in the restructuring of both partnerships. Various factors affected the relationships. The students were from varied backgrounds, bringing differing perspectives and language to

the writing tasks. The students also displayed differing attitudes towards both school and their peers. In addition, their abilities to communicate and cooperate, and to resolve conflicts varied. The aspect of humor affected both partnerships and often enabled the students to overcome temporary difficulties. The emergence of one dominant member within each partnership also affected the relationships as did the writing and thinking abilities of each student.

The Suportive Partnerships

During the lengthy prewriting stage, the students appeared to be very supportive of each other. They showed a great deal of excitement and pleasure most of the time. They were happy to be allowed to work together and talk together as evidenced by Sharon's comment that "It's fun to write together--we get to talk. Who doesn't like talking?" The students questioned and challenged each other. They agreed and disagreed. The disagreements centered on the content of the compositions and were not personal, evaluative statements. During the drafting stage, as they became accustomed to working together, and as their moods and feelings fluctuated, their relationship underwent continual changes. Dana expressed the fact that the relationships changed daily as he said:

> I can't find any other way--but me and Craig's relationship with the partnership is like the

stock market. One day you could be shooting all the way to the moon, and the next you could be fighting all the time.

Tensions and Conflicts

The students began to experience serious difficulties after approximately five weeks. Where their discussions had formerly been centered on the content of their stories, and had involved only minor disagreements, the students began to use evaluative, personal statements. They became unwilling to compromise and found negotiating very difficult. At times they found it necessary to seek help from the other partnership in order to come to an agreement. Many factors affected the relationships and appeared to cause tensions. The differing perspectives and attitudes which the students brought to the partnerships seemed to result in the dominance of one member. The family backgrounds and personalities also appeared to affect negotiation strategies, conflict resolution and cooperation. In addition, the differing writing and thinking abilities often were the cause of tensions.

The two pairs of students worked closely together for approximately one hour each day for the twelve weeks of the project. This close relationship was uncommon in the classroom situation. For the boys it was also uncommon as neither had siblings with whom interaction was possible in

the home setting. Dana had an excellent relationship with his parents, whereas Craig appeared to have many difficulties in his relationship with his mother and with his stepfather-to-be. In addition, there was a great deal of difference between the boys attitudes although their school reports indicated that their ability levels appeared to be very similar. Dana worked very hard toward successful negotiation in contrast to Craig's aggressive and often abusive behavior. The girls did not appear to have as many difficulties and were more closely matched in terms of ability level, family backgrounds and attitudes. Both girls had older sisters with whom they appeared to compete and to admire, in addition to the fact that both were average to above average students. Their attitudes toward communication and interaction were similar and they worked hard to negotiate within their partnership. The above factors thus affected 'how the students worked' and 'how they worked together.'

Dominance Within the Partnerships

In contrast to Burke (1985), who stated that within a collaborative arrangement, each participant is an equal partner, there appeared to be one dominant student within each partnership. In the boy's partnership, Craig's overtly aggressive habit of yelling and arguing made it appear that he was the dominant member of the pair. Craig found negotiation very difficult and had few skills with which to

solve conflicts. He talked loudly, quickly and often interrupted Dana. He was unable to listen to Dana's point of view. Dana's sense of humor and easy-going personality enabled him to persist in this relationship with tenacity. Similarly, in the girl's partnership, Sharon seemed to become the more dominant member of the pair. Again, she talked louder and faster and with much more force than Erica. It should be noted however, that the two quieter, seemingly "dominated" members were able to exercise their opinions, feelings and even their control very effectively. Their quiet, assertive statements carried much weight with their partners and often a concise comment commanded respect from their aggressive partners. Erica and Dana were able to maintain their positions within the partnerships through their confident, assertive manners.

There appeared to be more evidence of conflict within the boys' partnership than within the girls', due to the fact that the girls were more closely matched in terms of ability levels and attitudes. The girls appeared to have a more stable relationship than the boys. The very diverse attitudes and backgrounds caused the relationship within the boys' partnership to be rather volatile and unstable.

In contrast to the researcher's expectations, the more able and experienced writer did not always take control. Rather, the more aggressive and dominant personality became the determining factor with regard to leadership. Because of

this dominance, Dana and Erica, who were able and prolific writers became very frustrated within the partnership arrangement. Dana and Erica shared their thoughts with me regarding this at the end of the partnership.

> E: I, well, it was hard for me sometimes 'cause Sharon yelled at me a lot. I need to think about things for awhile and she, well, she's got lots of ideas--it's easy for her. She just says them right out.
>
> D: Ya, Craig would make me give him the ideas and he'd like control the whole thing as if they were his ideas. It's easy for me--the ideas just come, so, but Craig, he was--I guess he needed to feel like he was the leader. That's OK, but for writing, I have to do it on my own. Like I said before, I never argue with myself, but with Craig, wow!

Personal Backgrounds

The student's family backgrounds and personalities seemed to have a great deal of effect on the partnership relationships. The two boys appeared to have the greatest difficulty in their relationship due to their widely differing attitudes toward family, school, writing and cooperation. The girl's perspectives appeared to be fairly

similar, enabling them to work together more easily and successfully within their partnership.

The use of language became a source of tension between the two boys. Dana often commented on his own and Craig's use of what he called "coarse language". Dana was also concerned about the content of some of their discussions. Craig often attempted to steer the discussion to topics of girl/boy relationships or of extreme violence. Craig often discussed the various TV shows or movies he had seen. Because Dana had not seen many of them and because they were often promoted as movies for mature audiences, containing scenes relating to sex and violence, Dana refused to engage in these conversations or to let the suggested ideas become part of the written compositions. Dana's exposure to literature, travel and to theatre, his close relationship with his parents and his witty and humorous personality, made it difficult for him to relate to Craig's perspective. In his words,

> You see the kind of story he's writing, I just can't adapt to--I just can't! He wanted to do army stuff and violence and sex and boy/girl stuff. I mean I just can't handle that. I wanted to do a comedy or a mystery.

Craig did not seem to realize how inflexible and dominant he became. As a result of the problems with conflict resolution in his home situation, and because of his saturation with

violent movies as models of behavior, Craig experienced great difficulties within the partnership.

Although conflict and conflict resolution play an important part in cooperative learning and in social

maturation, the conflicts in these two partnerships eventually resulted in the "break-up" (Craig) and restructuring of the two pairs of students. The resulting restructuring of the partnerships will be discussed in the following section.

The Partnerships Restructured

After nine weeks the boys' relationship had deteriorated to the point where they were no longer able to work together cooperatively. They were unable to discuss their ideas without arguing and making personal, derogatory comments. They reported to me that they "had had enough and couldn't take it anymore" (Dana) but that they were going to "figure something out" (Craig). They began to work in separate locations, each writing individual compositions. Craig attempted to complete "Spies at Work" (See Appendix F.) which the two boys had worked on collaboratively. Dana eagerly began to work on a story he called "Edmonton Alert".(See Appendix F.)

The decision to work independently coincided with the announcement in their classroom of the school-wide author's

celebration and contest. Working independently, each student's particular writing style became evident. Dana worked feverishly, with great concentation and stated: "I am trying to write in the style of Eric Wilson, my favorite author". This composition appeared to be of high quality and was referred to by Dana as " one of my best stories ever!" Craig's attempts to finish "Spies at Work" proved to be very difficult for him. He seemed unable to work independently, had problems starting each day, and constantly harassed Dana to conference with him. He wrote little narrative, his style being limited to written speech, and was unable to sustain the story line. His language use concerned Dana as the following conversation indicates.

C: She was in the hospital. Then Sting goes, Wa da ya mean my honey's in the hospital? That's right she's--she's--You beephole. I'm going to kill you. You did it didn't you? No I didn't. Then who did? Dana what do you think of that?

D: Change beephole. (in very disgusted voice)

C: To what? asshole? (laughter)

D: Craig! change it to uhm--balonie brain or something

C: I like that! I like that!

D: Beephole? Get real Craig!

C: Sure! Everybody knows what it means. You know what I mean?

D: Craig sometimes you disgust me - know what I

mean? Anyway who the heck is Sting? He wasn't in our story!

At times such as this in their conferences, Dana appeared to be cold and impatient with Craig and was clearly unhappy with Craig's attempt to change their cooperative story. Craig seemed unable to begin each chapter and actually pleaded with Dana to help him. The following conversation illustrates a technique which Craig used in order to persuade Dana to conference with him.

C: I need to conference. I need to conference.[This time in strange accent attempting to imitate Dana's accents.]

D: Go conference with yourself.

C: I need to conference come on Dana!

D: Go conference with Bruce Springstein.

C: Please Dana please! Dana I gatta conference!

pause

D: Hands off Craig. (Craig has picked up Dana's watch which was lying on the desk.) That's my dad's. His dad passed it to him and he passed it to me. Uh...there's about to be a lot of violence in this room Craig if you don't give it up right now!

C: Dana please conference. (in whining voice)

D: Dana please conference. (Dana imitates whining voice) Craig I'm real wizzed at you. Give it up and leave me

alone.

Dana spoke about these problems with me after the partnership project had been completed. He said:

> You see my real setback was, Craig always wanted to conference. I could have been finished my story sooner but he kept wanting to conference the whole time. I can't understand why he can't think of a word--'cause it was his story--I mean he was the author. Why does he always need me?

Craig also shared his thoughts saying:

> I can't start off 'cause Dana won't help me. Dana's being a bum right now and I hate him, I hate him, I hate him. I have to think of what to write in this next chapter but I can't 'cause Dana won't--he's writing his own story.

Although Dana was very involved and excited with his own story he usually relented and helped Craig. Craig asked Dana for ideas and then proceeded to argue with the suggestions. These conferences quickly reverted to arguments, similar to those in the partnership, with Craig refusing to listen to or accept any of Dana's comments, but being unable to come up with his own ideas. At times Dana refused to conference with Craig, saying:

I'm so excited about my story Craig. Just leave me alone will ya? Try for yourself for once. All you do is argue anyway so what's the point. You can think--do it for crying out loud. Sometimes you make me so mad. Come on Craig--you can do it. Come on! Don't get pissed off--just try to read it over and then think what comes next OK?

Even in his anger, However Dana tried to help and encourage Craig. In the following example Dana attempted to help Craig get started in his own writing.

D: Maybe the story's too boring for you Craig. You can't get the feel of it. You can't get the rhythm of it. There's not enough action. It's not the kind of story you want?

C: Nah, I like it but...

D: Base it all around the kind of stories you like then, Craig.

C: Ya, ya...

D: What do you really like?

C: Vietnam, I really like Vietnam stuff.

D: THEN WRITE ABOUT THAT! (said very slowly and emphatically)

C: A war could come--out of nowhere--all the terrorists could be shooting and taking hostages and...

D: CRAIG--IT'S YOUR MIND--YOU CAN DO ANYTHING--IT

CAN BE OUT OF THE ORDINARY IF YOU WANT TO (said very slowly and seriously again)

long pause

C: What if I started a new story?

D: You don't have time for that, but if you did you could do it.

C: I'm going to! No I'm going to do this one - OK this is chapter 5.

In chapter four of "Spies at Work" Craig had decided to add two new characters called Sting and Chop. In one of the conferences Dana disagreed with these new additions, indicating that he still felt some ownership in the story. At this point, Craig suddenly decided to enter this story into the contest under his own name, saying that he had Dana's permission. He appeared to be very excited about the fact that he might suddenly be recognized by his peers as a successful writer. He attempted to persuade his teacher and myself of his decision.

At this point, the classroom teacher realized that no allowance had been made for any of the partnership writing compositions and perhaps a special category should be added to the competition. It was not my intention in this study to include this element of competition, nor did I wish to interfere with this school project, so a decision was made to make no additional contest category. Craig appeared to be

very disappointed and indeed angry with the decision made by myself and the classroom teacher that it would be unethical to submit an entry under one's own name, when it had been worked on cooperatively.

After three weeks the boys appeared to have worked out a partnership which suited their needs. Their conferences were short, wasting little time due to the insistence of Dana who preferred to work on his own story. Their friendship was again evident and they appeared to enjoy sharing their work. Although Craig would have preferred to work together, Dana was excited and thankful to be working on his own story. The comments of both students illustrate their feelings at this point.

D: Craig was real ticked off when we broke up. Basically the problem was argruing and Craig wanted me to give all the ideas, and then he wanted it his way. But uhm the good thing was that we tried to work together and I think we did pretty good for a while. My story I'm work--on right now is fantastic--I cant' believe it!

C: It's hard for me. I don't have anybody to talk to now--to help me figure out what I'm doing. But at least I can think of more things now.

The girls' problems were similar to those of the boys, in that their reorganization of the partnership also coincided with the announcement of the author's contest. Erica decided to try to enter the contest, while Sharon was happy to write on her own without the added element of competition. The two girls continued to work at the same table and appeared to be content to work on their own compositions. Although Sharon continued to use the tape recorder, often reading her written work and then playing it back in order to listen to it, Erica worked quietly beside her, appearing to have no difficulty concentrating. Erica decided to submit the " Will", which she had written, and therefore worked on second and final, edited drafts of this composition. She became concerned when Sharon decided not to finish her "Will" and expressed this concern to me. I was surprised at this concern as, up to this point, there had been few statements regarding the work habits of the partner.

The Use of Taperecorders When Working Alone

Three of the four students continued to use a taperecorder when composing alone, after the experience of composing collaboratively. They explained that they talked to themselves and asked themselves questions and that "it really worked". They had become accustomed to externalizing their thought processes and found that talking through their ideas was very helpful in their writing. Dana appeared to almost interact with himself as he asked himself questions

and made comments on his progress or on the way a sentence sounded. Craig used the taperecorder continuously to replay the beginning of "Spies at Work" story in order to commence his own writing. On some occasions he spent an entire writing period, simply replaying the recorded story. Sharon stopped occasionally during her individual compositions to read her story. She then listened to it intently, often shaking her head and jotting down markings on her story.

Partnerships and Friendships

Although cooperative learning offers many benefits, it may also involve difficulties as illustrated above. It is important that students be considered individually and that their social maturation and social relationships be taken into consideration during cooperative learning situations. The students shared their thoughts with me regarding relationships with peers during the partnership writing project. When asked if their friendships had suffered during or after the restructured partnerships , Sharon replied:

> NO! No problem. When we split up, it wasn't like our friendship split up--it was just that we needed to write on our own topics for a while and we needed to get away from all the arguing all the time. That was hard to have to agree all the time - like we didn't always agree and then we had to compromise and that's hard. It was really fun to have her [Erica] as a partner cause she was really

> interested in my writing and ideas. When you talk to a friend, they always kind of respond to what you say--it helps especially when you have a problem.

The girls commented on the type of relationship that best suited them. Sharon stated:

> When we were writing our stories, we took a whole lot of time to do one paragraph because we had a hard time agreeing and we spent the whole time arguing. Then when we each wrote our own versions of the cat characters, it was a lot easier because you just wrote what you thought and then you conferenced with the other person. After we split up, we still sat together and each wrote our own stories.

Erica's thoughts were more serious as she said:

> Well you see we're just quite different. I have to write alone and I need quiet and well Sharon is a lot of fun (smiles) but I need more quiet when I write. It was quite good after we split up because we sat together and each wrote our own stories and we conferenced when we needed, except Sharon wanted to conference more than me, like Craig. She didn't beg like Craig though.

Students' Perceptions of Partnership Writing

One of the criteria by which the students were chosen to be in the partnership writing project was that they were able to verbalize their thoughts. Three of the four students chosen were very articulate. Craig was the least articulate but, although he was more general in the expression of his thoughts, he was still able to share to some extent. During the twelve weeks of the project, the students often spontaneously shared their thoughts with me. At other times I conducted interviews to enquire about certain aspects of the writing and of the partnerships. The students talked about the differences in their opinions and writing styles, about the dominance of one of their members, of respect for each other and about problems they encountered.

Dana, one of the most articulate of the four students, shared his thoughts on what it was like to write together and to write alone.

> When you're working on your own, you can continue with it at any time--like in class, at home, in your head even if you hate science. For me--I'm sorry, but it's better alone - you can agree with yourself, I'll miss the partnership, but writing together--it's just been too much for me, you know. You just agree with yourself and you don't even realize you're doing it.

Craig then came into the conversation.

C: I don't like working alone. I'm alone enough.

D: You don't listen though Craig--you interrupt.

C: I try Dana--really I do--I just get--like I don't like being alone.

D: I like working alone better. You don't have to bother people. When you're by yourself, you just have to go ... [Dana pretends to write alone. He mumbles, flips pages, scribbles, erases, ponders.] It's sort of quieter and you have more time--and you can think--and you can agree with yourself--like there's not many times when I fight with myself Craig--but I fight with you all the time. What's the point?

C: It's hard for me to write alone--now--now I have no one to talk to...

D: argue with you mean

C: Ha, you just interrupted like I always do.

[laughter]

C: I don't have anybody to help me figure out what I'm doing. Dana has this great imagination--[Craig has turned toward me] he helped me figure out things I didn't know. I can think of a few more ideas now than I did before. He can create stuff right out of his head--he keeps everybody in

class laughing. He kills me. I just get stuck for ideas when I'm alone. I need him to help me.

D: Usually I helped, helped, helped. You got a little ticked off didn't you when we split up? But it was better for me--honestly Craig--I just couldn't stand your arguing anymore. I needed some of my own time.

Sharon's and Erica's thoughts were similar when they talked to me about how they felt at the end of the partnerships.

E: At the end you know I just didn't even feel like arguing anymore, so... But I can't think of ideas and Sharon helped me with that--I get real stuck sometimes for ideas--with Sharon there's--there's lots of ideas flying around. She's, she's just full of ideas. In the partnership you got more freedom too to ask someone for help cause it's your partner. You can talk about everything.

S: I liked it. I like to talk about all my ideas and I like to figure it all out with someone else. It got kind of hard you know because I get really excited and I yelled at Erica--she's so picky though you know.
(smiles)

Four of the students statements illustate their varying thoughts on the partnership.

D: Some days it's easy--all goes well and some days it's bad--it's really hard.

E: Well... it's both actually--easy and hard--maybe at different times it's harder...

C: It helped me--I loved talking to someone.

S: She helped me--about quotations and ... other things too.

The students had definite opinions on topics for their writing. They preferred to write fiction as illustrated by some of their comments.

E: Well, I write fiction mostly--it's more interesting to make it up--it's better than writing about your own life. Mrs. W. asked us to write personal stories once but it was hard to make it sound interesting you know? I'd write nonfiction if I could change some parts--if I could add and change and make it more interesting than just what actually happened.

C: I like writing stories best, from my head. It's so hard to write, I don't know, personal stuff. I just write about the movies I see. I can't make up stuff like Dana. Nothin' ever happens to me

like to him anyway, that's good enough to write about so why would I want to write it?

S: I wrote a thank you note to my grandma once. I like writing stories from my head better though-- like not true ones. I find it easier to write from my head. I've got tons of ideas. I can change anything I want in the stories too.

The students varied in their opinions on what their purposes for writing were and who their audiences were. Craig felt that the reason he wrote was for his teacher, when she insisted. Dana and Sharon stated that they often wrote on their own, for fun. Erica stated that she wrote when she had an assignment. When asked who they wrote for, all four students felt that they wrote for their peers, to share with during "Author's Circle".

The partnership arrangement served the four students in various ways. For Craig, who was a weak student and whose self-esteem was low, the partnership enabled him to "feel like a real writer for the first time". (Craig) In admiration for Dana he said: "Dana, he knows stuff. He has a great imagination and he helped me a lot." For Dana, the partnership was perhaps an exercise in patience. He was an avid writer, with a creative imagination who needed little more than the opportunity to write. He stated that "I'd rather write alone - sorry - it's true - what can I say? But I love to read mine out. They have lots of suspense and

humor so everybody likes to hear them. I sort of write them so I know people will like them you know." For Erica the partnership was also rather difficult because of her strict and rather inflexible approach to writing. However as she stated: "I get stuck with ideas and Sharon has so many - it's good that way." For Sharon, the partnership offered an opportunity to "talk and laugh and I love to talk - who doesn't? But I also really liked the writing, except it was hard sometimes cause Erica had to get it right all along you know."

Expressive Language

Expressive language appeared to play an important role in the cooperative interaction of the students. This section deals with the student's use of expressive language, through which learning is facilitated.

Expressive language--language between friends which is context bound and often rambling and exploratory in nature, became the language of these partnerships. As the students worked together there were many half-uttered and unclear segments of speech. What one student initiated, the other often completed. Through exploring their ideas together, the students were able to think about, talk about and write about many interesting ideas, which they otherwise may not have contemplated themselves. One of the functions of expressive language is that it generates confidence and reciprocity.(Britton, 1977, cited in "Language in the

Classroom : A Series", p.7) This trust enabled Erica to take the risk of trying out her ideas. In this excerpt, the two girls were attempting to solve the problem of the proposed cat bylaw. They were deciding what could be done about the many cats who roam at will.

E: I think--this is kind of stupid Sharon--very stupid.

S: Tell me.

E: Well, what if there's a place where cats can go, like an area or something.

S: How are they going to keep them there? If there was this area, it'd be the sleaziest place around, a waste of land.

E: I know--a daycare for cats!

The students in the partnership writing project had no fear of censure in their writing or talking. No specific guidelines or restrictions were put forth. This enabled them to be confident in the sharing of their ideas together. Their everyday language enabled them to learn about themselves and their world and about the experiences of others. In this conversation, Dana and Craig discussed the meaning of the word "Yukon".

C: Where should this story take place?

D: How 'bout the UK?

C: Naw, not the Yukon. I don't want it there.

D: Not Yukon--UK!

C: Where's that?

D: It's in Britain

C: Naw, not Yukon or UK or whatever.

In both discussions, the students worked in the expressive mode--in their own language--in the only language in which they could operate naturally. In both cases this natural language is in no way substandard or ineffective. For them, this language accomplishes their purpose of working together to write. It says what they want to say. Sharon and Dana were often able to fall back on their humor and wit during times of stress. This expressive language was a useful tool, furthing the social interaction between the partners.

The language remained expressive throughout the duration of both partnerships, in that it was relaxed, self-revealing and addressed only to the partner. This context-bound language served a purpose for the two partners only at this particular time. Expressive language is an educative language--a language for learning--one free of control and expectations. When asked about their language, the students said:

> Well we just talked like we always do--except sometimes Craig or I used coarse language or we talked about stuff that was ... well ... you know ... It didn't really have a lot to do

with our story and it was pretty--dirty--and well--We were able to get on track again you know.

The Partnerships Compared

There appeared to be various similarities and differences in the writing strategies and in the relationships of the two partnerships. The following discussion will focus on these similarities and differences.

Similarities

At certain times in both partnerships, there appeared to be one dominant student within the working relationship. In each case, this dominant student appeared to be the weaker, less experienced writer of the two--in essence 'the one who could yell louder'. At other times the partnerships seemed to consist of fairly equal members who were negotiating and cooperating effectively. Within the girls' partnership, where the students were both very able writers, the student who actually stated that she was not competitive became the more forceful partner. Within the boys' partnership the weaker student, having the low self-sesteem, controlled the negotiations for much of the time.

Within both partnerships the students eventually became unable to negotiate successfully. The decision was made by both pairs of students to restructure the partnerships to work in a more independent manner. The girls were able to

sit together and continue the partnership through conferencing, while working on independent compositions. The boys however chose to sit in separate locations. One of the boys, Dana, was a prolific writer and was very anxious to work on his own composition; while the other, Craig, would have preferred to continue working together at all times.

In both partnerships after decisions were made to work on separate compositions, the students collaborated in a manner similar to the classroom, where spontaneous conferences took place as needed. One of the boys attempted to complete a composition that had been started in the partnership. The difficulties encountered during conferences appeared to stem from the fact that the student who was working independently continued to retain partial ownership in this composition and did not agree with changes made.

After the initial partnerships dissolved and the students were able to work out their own arrangements they became aware of the problems but also of the benefits of the partnership. The students in both pairs were able to talk about their partner's strengths, but realized that these same strength had caused many difficulties.

The choice of topic was similar for the two parntership in that both chose murder-mystery stories for their major project. In discussion with the students, it was evident that the majority of their writing ideas were based on specific television programs and movies.

In both partnerships the students were able to switch from an intense argumentative style to a humorous, cooperative one within a very short time span. Perhaps due to the fact that it may be quite unusual for students to work in pairs for extended periods of time, these students appeared to enjoy working and talking together much of the time. The students did not appear to carry grudges over long periods of time; however one student in each partnership appeared to become very conciliatory and often did the majority of the compromising.

Within both partnerships, the weaker student appeared to gain more benefit from the assistance that one student is able to offer another. The two weaker students, overall (Craig) and in a particular area (Erica's seeming lack of ideas), were both aware that their partners were able to help them. They were also able to verbalize and accept this situation with little difficulty.

Students in both partnerships preferred to write fiction. They also preferred to write mystery stories involving murder, which they called murder-mysteries. They commented that their teacher had asked them to write about a personal experience, but that this had been difficult and boring. They preferred to use their imaginations and write about events which could possibly happen to them, as opposed to writing about events which had actually happened to them.

Differences

One of the major differences between the two partnerships is related to the ability levels and attitudes within each pair. Although cumulative records indicated that the two boys were of similar ability levels, they appeared to have quite different degrees of success with school tasks. Where Dana's self-esteem was high, Craig's was low. Where Dana was a very positive and happy student, Craig appeared to be very much the opposite. Where Dana appeared to be fairly successful in school tasks, Craig experienced great difficulty and at times appeared to put little effort into his work.

For these reasons, Dana appeared to feel very frustrated with the partnership arrangement after approximately five weeks. He became anxious to write independently stating this in the last interview. Craig preferred to work together at all times. Within the girls' partnership it appeared that ability levels and attitudes were more closely matched. While Erica was a very serious student, Sharon was a bubbly and cheerful one. Both were hardworking students who liked to write and who had a good deal of success with school tasks. This particular combination seemed to produce a more workable relationship than that of the boys'.

On the topic of serious writing--the writing of opinions regarding an issue affecting their lives, the partnerships differed. The girls appeared to have much more success with

this type of writing and discussion. The girls discussed the Edmonton City Council's proposal to institute a cat bylaw--an issue of great importance to one of them. The boys however talked about whether or not the president of the United States should be male or female and produced a text consisting of only a few lines. They were unable to maintain their discussion for more than fifteen minutes, returning to the topic of television series, movies and fictional, murder stories. In contrast, the girls spent approximately two weeks on the issue of the proposed cat bylaw.

Partnership writing appeared to have different effects on the friendships of the students involved, upon completion of the project. The boys did not appear to change their relationship after the project. They continued to socialize at recess and in school, and seemed have no difficulties because of disagreements within the partnership writing. This may have been due to the fact that Craig seemed to idolize Dana, while Dana was a very popular student. The two girls however appeared to go their separate ways after the project, and given the opportunity to work together during class time, did not choose to do so. This may have been due to the fact that Erica was a very serious student who worked quietly on her own the majority of the time, while Sharon was extremely outgoing and often was chosen by other students to work together.

Summary

This chapter presented the major themes which emerged in the study. The depth and scope of each theme was developed through the "generous use of examples and verbatim quotations". (Massey,1988) In this analysis, the following themes were discussed: the writing strategies, the relationships, the restructured partnerships, the student's perceptions, expressive language and the partnerships compared.

Although strategies varied somewhat between the two partnerships, both pairs of students placed a great deal of emphasis on the prewriting phase of the writing process. Characters, plot and titles were thoroughly discussed and the students had a good idea of the format of their stories before the actual writing began. Due to the interactive nature of the partnerships, the drafting, revising and editing phases of the writing process appeared to meld into one continual conference. The students appeared to place little emphasis on the postwriting stage, until the added factors of incentive and competition related to the author's contest were introduced.

Within both partnerships there appeared to be a great deal of supportive behavior whereby both students were enabled to extend their language abilities. There also appeared to be many tensions and conflicts resulting in the eventual restructuring of the two partnerships.

Expressive language became the language of the partnerships--the medium through which the learning took place. The students worked in their everyday, personal language, laughing, arguing, explaining and at times using "coarse language".

There were many similarities and differences in the strategies and relationships of the two partnerships, enabling the researcher to more fully understand what partnership writing entailed.

The students shared their thoughts and opinions throughout the study and upon its completion. These insights into the students perspectives were very important in developing an understanding of partnership writing.

CHAPTER 6

LOOKING BACK--LOOKING AHEAD

This chapter provides a brief summary of the study and a discussion of the major findings. Conclusions are discussed in terms of the research questions and implications for research and practice are presented.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study of partnership writing was to gain a better understanding of how four grade five students thought, talked and wrote, when working together in a cooperative writing situation. In particular the study set out to examine 1) the special features distinguishing partnership writing, 2) the processes the students used for negotiating the meaning and structural elements of writing through the partnership relationship, 3) the social context of the partnership and its effects on the writing of the students, 4) the concepts of the process of writing and cooperative learning combined and 5) the implications of partnership writing for classroom teachers and for research.

The Collection and Analysis of the Data

A qualitative research approach was used, in which two pairs of students recorded their oral language during daily

writing periods, composing collaboratively for a period of twelve weeks. The students were formally interviewed three times during the study in addition to many informal interviews which took the form of spontaneous discussions. The researcher was present for approximately 50% of the writing episodes, although the students recorded their oral language at all writing sessions. Data was collected through the use of audiotaped conversations and interviews, in addition to oral and written communication with the classroom teacher. Data was also obtained through examination of observational fieldnotes and the students' written texts. This data was examined in order to discover the major themes or patterns. While acknowledging the phases of the writing process as identified by Donald Murray (1984) and by Donald Graves (1975) the students appeared to develop phases unique to the partnerships. All data was reported in a descriptive manner.

Findings of the Study

The findings of this study are summarized below. These findings are then discussed with reference to the research questions.

It can be concluded that cooperative learning may have many benefits for developing writers in upper elementary levels of schooling. Students may be more aware of a sense of audience through writing with an interested partner. Students are exposed to various writing styles through

interaction, and as they respond to others' work. Students may also have a stronger motivation for writing and for revising through interaction with peers.

One of the major conclusions of this study is that cooperative learning may also have serious drawbacks, none of which appear to have been cited in recent research.

One significant conclusion regards the importance of talk, in particular of expressive language, as a means of learning. In addition to the importance of talk as a means of learning, it was concluded that writing is also an important means of learning.

One of the major findings that came about in this study was the emphasis students placed on the prewriting phase of the writing process. There was little evidence of interest in the postwriting phase, until the elements of incentive and competition were introduced through a school-wide author celebration and contest.
In addition, revision appeared to be limited to content (clarity of ideas), as opposed to the stylistic or mechanical aspects of writing.

An important insight gained from this study was that partnership writing became one continual and cyclical process of rehearsal, drafting, revision, and editing. Conferencing, involving all of these phases, may also have became a more natural process for the students.

Conclusions as Related to the Research Questions

It is hoped that this specific, educational research may offer implications for other educational contexts, and that it is possible "to work our way out of the specialized context toward an understanding of what would be most feasible and most fruitful in classrooms in general." (Applebee & Langer, 1981.p.1) In this study, it was the researcher's primary aim to "delineate observations" (Stacey, 1978, p.85) regarding partnership writing. Conclusions are presented regarding the special features which distinguish partnership writing, the negotiation of the meaning and stuctural elements of partnership writing, the effects of the social context of the partnerships on the students' writing, and the concepts of the writing process and of cooperative learning combined. The following section presents these conclusions with reference to the research questions.

1) What special features distinguish partnership writing?

Partnership writing appeared to become one continual conference, where boundaries between phases of the writing process were not clearly distinguishable. This cyclical process, although also evident in solitary writers to some degree, appeared to be due to the interactive nature of the relationships, whereby the partners were continually rehearsing, drafting and revising together throughout the composing process.

The students carried out structured, group conferences which appeared to be a direct replication of techniques which they had been taught in their classroom writing program. Within these structured conferences, cooperative learning appeared to be at its best, as there was no evidence of aggressive or abusive behavior. In addition, the students engaged in a great deal of sharing, questioning and responding--all of which are necessary for growth as writers. The students referred to these group conferences as "Author's Circle", in accordance with their classroom label. Given structure within which to work, these students were able to work cooperatively and were able to further develop their skills in the writing process. The need for structure within a writing program cannot be overemphasized.

The importance of talk as a means of learning, and in particular, as a means of cooperative learning, was shown by these students. The students appeared to spend a great deal of time in discussion. The extensive use of expressive language enabling students to approach learning through their own words, was evident, due to the close relationships presupposing trust and confidence. In many instances the students appeared to enjoy the interactions and were enthusiastic about the writing. Laughter and smiles were often evident. Three of the four students continued to use talk as a means of clarifying and extending ideas while working independently, in the restructured partnerships.

Within both partnerships, continual scaffolding was evident where, through constant interaction, the students became teachers and learners interchangeably. The students were enabled to become more aware of their individual writing processes, due to this continual scaffolding. The need to externalize inner thoughts, in order to explain and clarify them for partners, enabled the students to better understand their individual thinking and writing processes. When composing individually, after the restructuring of the partnerships, two of the four students appeared to talk themselves through their writing as they had previously done with their partners. This continuation of externalization of inner processes appeared to be beneficial for these two writers. Acknowledging the opportunity for scaffolding which the partnership facilitated, it would appear however that it was the weaker student who may have had the most to gain from this type of relationship. Through the use of temporary scaffolds (modelled techniques and strategies), these students were enabled to work toward more independent writing strategies and to gradually remove these scaffolds.

There appeared to be a great deal of sharing and mutual generation of ideas in the partnerships. Little concern as to which partner generated or used a particular idea was evident, until the element of competition was imposed on the partnerships, due to the school-wide author celebration and contest. This competitive element may have accelerated the restructuring of the partnerships, as two of the students

suddenly became very concerned about the origination and use of certain ideas.

The students placed a great deal of emphasis on the prewriting phase of the writing process. This phase became a very time-consuming aspect of their cooperative writing. Extensive planning and clarification of details was undertaken orally, before the actual commencement of the compositions. As with beginning writers, the amount of oral language as compared to the amount of written text produced was disproportionate. The students did not appear to be concerned with the postwriting phase until the added incentive and competitive aspect of the school-wide celebration and contest was introduced.

The benefits of cooperative or interactive learning were evident in this study. The collaborative learning situation appeared to foster interaction and communication between the students, in addition to enabling them to become more aware of their covert writing processes through the externalization of their thoughts. In addition to fostering these life skills of communication and cooperation, the students were enabled to develop their thinking and writing skills through the peer relationships.

Cooperative or interactive learning may also have drawbacks for developing writers. Overt, aggressive behavior became very evident within both partnerships. Because of this

aggressiveness, and because of the the need for constant negotiation, both partnerships were eventually dissolved and restructured by the students according to their individual needs. Individual compositions were undertaken and periodic conferencing was decided upon by the students as the need arose. The recognizably weaker student appeared to require constant assistance. Thus cooperative learning was of great benefit to the weaker student, as supported by the research of Johnson & Johnson (1975, 1981). This suggests that each student is unique in his approach to writing, and that constant negotiation with another partner may perhaps interfere with the individual process of writing. It also suggests that not all peer interaction is profitable for all students. It is possible that cooperative learning may foster dependency among weaker students, to the detriment of the stonger ones, in certain prolonged, collaborative situations.

Cooperative learning should perhaps be considered as a bridging activity, toward more independent learning. In contrast to the research of Carolyn Burke, (1985) who stated that "in collaborative arrangements each participant is an equal partner, seeing himself as a reader and writer" the present researcher found that the dominance of one partner, and the differing perspectives of the students did not enable them to be equal partners.

2) How do students negotiate the meaning and structural elements of writing through the partnership?

The students placed a great deal of emphasis on meaning within their compositions. Extensive discussions for the purpose of clarifying details were undertaken in the prewriting and drafting phases. As a result of Dana's fascination with the style of Eric Wilson, the boys attempted to write in a similar manner. Three of the four students appeared to show little concern for the conventions of written language in the first drafts, stating that they "just wanted to get their ideas all down - so people could visualize them " (Dana), that "anyway we take it to class editors and they just go whoosh and fix it all up" (Craig) and stating, "I just like to get it down first and then later go back and figure out all the spelling and the sentences" (Sharon).

As very few second drafts were completed or attempted, (three compositions--two of which were written individually after the restructuring, and one short composition which was written cooperatively) the students appeared to place little emphasis on the conventions of writing, such as might be addressed through mechanical revision and editing. Within the girls' partnership, because of Erica's concern for correct presentation, the writing appeared to be of high quality both mechanically and with respect to the content of the compositions. Two of the four students began to prepare

compositions for publishing near the end of the research project, after the announcement of the school-wide "authors' contest". Is it possible then that given no restrictions, students are more interested in the process of writing--in the doing and making of a story--and that it is perhaps adults who are interested in the correct presentation of the product?

The partnerships facilitated the students' externalization of their mental processes. Through the explanation and sharing of ideas with their partners, the students were better able to understand their own thinking processes. This metacognition--making overt what is usally covert, became an important and valuable aspect of the partnerships.

3) How does the social context of the partnership affect the writing of the students involved?

The continual conferencing and "scaffolding" which the paired relationships facilitated enabled the students to externalize their thinking processes. Because of this constant interaction in the form of questioning, clarifying, explaining, reading and rereading, many of the resulting compositions were well-developed with a clear plot line. The characters within the stories were also well-developed due to the fact that there was extensive discussion during the prewriting phase.

This continual interaction also caused many problems which surfaced in the form of aggressive arguments. The students in both partnerships had difficulties with the constant negotiations of writing collaboratively. In both situations they devised temporary means of alleviating the tensions. The use of humor and of debates were two such means. These techniques did not appear to enable the partnerships to continue further however and eventually the students decided to work on their own and to create their own, new partnerships. This new form of partnership allowed the students to work on individual compositions and to conference when needed. After many weeks of continual interaction, three of the students appeared to be very content to work individually, and to conference periodically. They worked with eagerness and enthusiasm. It appeared that they were able to accept this degree of cooperative learning. Craig however seemed unable to write alone. For him the partnership had been one of the first instances of success in the area of writing and in peer relationships that he had experienced.

Working individually, after the restructuring of the partnerships, three of the students appeared to talk to themselves in a manner that was similar to the interactions within the partnership. These students stated that they were able to think more clearly if they talked to themselves and that the partnership had shown them how to "get things clear so my partner can understand me". (Erica) Thus they were

more aware of their internal processes and more able to express them.

4) What further information can be gained about the process of writing and about cooperative learning through the study of partnership writing?

Through partnership writing, conferencing, which is essential to a writer's growth and development, became a natural part of the writing process. Rehearsal, drafting, writing, revision, and editing all become overlapping phases where distinct boundaries are not distinguishable.

Through collaborative writing the use of expressive language was validated. By coming to terms with the process of writing through the vehicles of one's own expressive language, (by talking and writing with a peer), it is possible that a more positive attitude toward writing will be fostered.

Cooperative learning had positive effects on individual students. The researcher acknowledges and supports the many benefits of cooperative learning as previously cited. In accordance with these benefits, the students did appear to be more aware of a sense of audience and of various writing styles as they responded to each others' work. In addition there did appear to be a strong sense of motivation for writing and revising, due to the continual conferencing. Cooperative learning appeared to have a positive effect on

the student's problem-solving abilites, as indicated when conflicts were resolved through the restructuring of the partnerships.

In this study, there appeared to be several drawbacks to cooperative learning, although the researcher was unable to obtain other research in support of this suggestion. While fostering a sense of cooperation and communication, and supporting the less able student, cooperative learning may also have had detrimental effects on the more able students. Its continual use may have inhibited the development of the more able writer, whose time may have been better spent developing an individual writing style. It is possible that not all cooperative interaction is beneficial for all students. Careful consideration must be taken in the formation, use, membership, and length of groups, in order that all students have the opportunity to extend their learning.

Implications for Practice and Research

The results of this study have a number of implications for the instruction of children's writing and for language development in the classroom. Although the implications for teaching may not apply to any one classroom or individual classroom teacher, it is hoped that a further understanding of language development, (in particular of children's writing processes) and of interactive or cooperative learning, will be gained. It is also hoped that the

discussion of the coping mechanisms or dispute resolution which the students used such as humor and quick dismissals, may have implications for others involved in cooperative learning situations. It is believed that the study will contribute to the existing body of research regarding language development and cooperative learning.

Implications for Educational Practice

The researcher observed that the students enjoyed interacting with a trusted partner and that this partnership facilitated some writing of high quality. The students explained that they found the partnership to be helpful in learning how to express ideas more clearly. The students were also able to better understand the process of writing by working with a partner, and by being able to use personal, expressive language. The partnership also provided the incentive, purpose and audience for writing. This suggests that a great deal of learning is possible through talking and writing among peers.

The students expressed concerns about working together and in particular they were concerned with their perceived need to agree on everything they wrote collaboratively. The researcher observed these difficulties and found evidence of these problems in the strong arguments which ensued. These findings suggest that writing may be more of a solitary and personal endeavor than expected, and that some students may

need to develop their own styles and approaches with the respect and support of teachers and peers.

The benefits and drawbacks of cooperative learning approaches must be carefully considered. Through observations, interviews and transcriptions of students thoughts and feelings it became apparent that cooperative learning approaches related to writing together may have the most benefit for the weaker student. The more able and indeed the the prolific writers appeared to prefer to develop their writing styles simply by writing, rather than by constantly scaffolding the weaker student. These findings suggest that as educators, we must carefully consider how we group students in order that both the weaker and the more able students are extended. It is also suggested that cooperative learning be a temporary move toward independent devlepment and not an end in itself.

The use of audiotapes to record students' oral language while writing, provided a revealing externalization of the student's inner thinking processes. It is suggested that students be allowed to "feel their way into a meaning" (Barnes, cited in Berry, 1982, p. 40) by talking their ideas through with a partner when needed. These findings emphasize the importance of talk as a means of learning and in particular as a means of learning how to develop writing skills.

The students did not appear to place a great deal of emphasis on the final product of the writing process. With the introduction of the school-wide writing contest and celebration, two of the four students became more actively involved in producing a final product. The other two students did not wish to compete in the area of writing. They were content to share their work with their partner. These findings suggest that the elements of incentive and competition need to be carefully considered in classroom writing programs where students develop individual styles and approaches.

Implications for Further Research

As indicated in the review of the literature, there appears to be little research dealing with the composing processes of upper elementary students. Thus educators must rely on the body of research in the area of emergent literacy. Although Donald Graves has conducted much research on the writing processes of children, he continues to state that, "Since so little data has ever been gathered ... on the process of teaching writing, [it] ought to be considered " (Graves, 1984, p.104) The major conclusions of this study indicate that many quesions are left unanswered and further research is needed in this area. It is hoped that the findings of this study have shed light on three of Graves' (1984) suggested research questions. These questions were:

1. What is the relationship between children's oral

language and what they do during the writing process?

2. How does the child use language to discuss the writing process?

3. How do children change in making the transition from oral to written discourse?

It is hoped that this study will also join with others in forming a more comprehensive understanding of language development and in particular of the composing processes of upper elementary students. In addition to addressing the above research questions posed by Donald Graves (1984) the researcher suggests that the following questions be considered for future investigation.

1. What is the role of cooperative learning in the area of language development with respect to upper elementary students?

2. How can the less able writer be supported and encouraged in his writing endeavors?

#. How can the more competent writer be scaffolded and extended to work to his/her potential?

3. What role does the teacher perform for developing writers?

4. What is the role of peers in the development of writing skills?

5. What role does oral language play in the writing process?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Looking back upon completion of this thesis, it is with regret that I cannot continue to revise. As Lucy Calkins said, "all writing could be considered as revision" (personal correspondence) and one is never really finished writing. I undertook the writing of this thesis for two reasons. I sincerely wanted to learn more about writing and about cooperative learning; and as an elementary teacher, I wanted to continue to help student writers.

In this hurried world, it was a pleasure to be given the opportunity to study--to read, to reflect, to watch and to listen. To sit and write about these children and their lives was indeed a learning experience for me. I feel privileged to have learned how they articulated their individual worlds.

What really matters here? What is there for others beyond my own gleaning of knowledge? The 'doing' of this study was a journey for me--one of personal and professional growth. Therefore, I encourage others--educators, parents, and scholars to take part in this pleasurable struggle. I encourage them to learn as much about children as possible and in so doing to learn about themselves. There is great satisfaction to be gained in an endeavor such as this.

What did I learn? I learned about children, about writing, about cooperation, about competition, about myself, about

"doing research", about learning and even about the computer.

I would caution future researchers to carefully consider 'methods' of research and to use one which is appropriate to the material or persons being studied. I would also remind others that 'real people' are involved and that care must be taken with all individuals.

In the end, I see Dana. I see the mischievous smile and the twinkle in his eyes as he tells me how "Tom's heart stopped... ". I hear his voice and recall his enthusiasm for writing. These memories will remain with me long after the details of my study are forgotten. He continues to send me his writing for "my reactions to the first three chapters" he says. This year his writing is full of the dreaded "boy/girl stuff" which he so forcefully opposed last year. I guess he is growing up.

There are still many areas I would like to investigate. I still wonder if Craig will become a better writer and a happier person. I wonder whether Sharon and Erica will be as successful in their lives as they appear to be at this point in their schooling. I would like to further investigate the mapping of oral to written language. I'd also like to have a better understanding of why competition seems to be such a necessary part of our lives. Finally, I will always continue to investigate the area of writing as it relates to children or adults.

At the beginning of the study, it seemed that there was so much to be said. How would I make sense of it all? It was the students who sorted it out for me. They said it all. I merely captured their words and experiences within these pages.

So this thesis stands. No more revisions. I will continue to wonder and to reflect about children and about writing, as though my thoughts grace other paper, in other forms.

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APPENDIX A

PARENTAL REQUEST FORM

PARENTAL REQUEST FORM

Dear _____,

As a language arts teacher I am conducting a study concerning the process of writing. I am interested in how students become competent writers. I will be spending two afternoons each week for twelve weeks in Mrs. Wilson's classroom, in order to learn more about this process. During this time I will be observing children engaged in the process of writing.

Would you permit me to tape record your child's conversation during the writing process as he/she works with a partner, in order that I may study what I am calling Partnership Writing? Please complete the information below and return it to Mrs. Wilson. If you would like additional information please call the school. A short summary of this study can be made available upon completion if requested.

Yours truly,
Catherine Lewis
Graduate Student
Elementary Education
University of Alberta

Sponsored by
Dr. J. Edwards
Elementary Education
University of Alberta

I am willing to have my child participate in the research project in writing in Mrs. Wilson's class.

_____ _____ _____

APPENDIX B

EXAMPLE OF WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE WITH TEACHER

EXAMPLE OF WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE WITH CLASSROOM TEACHER

(text in quotation marks indicates teacher's comments.)

Dear Mrs. W___,

When the students write in your classroom for the last hour each day, do they follow the steps you've outlined in your lessons or do they seem to need to be 'pushed'? Do they help each other?

"They seem to need to be 'pushed' until they get the satisfaction of seeing their writing change and improve. Then they revise as they read to share. So often a second draft is really a third. Does that make sense? Yes they help each other. We could do more of this if we were in a closed classroom."

Do you intervene in their writing--in the conferences?

"I try not to. I try to just ask about their story and get them to see where it's unclear. Sometimes I do intervene."

Can you tell me about some of the other kinds of writing in your classroom?

"They do research--they write about a theme, they write opinions. They also write summaries. They write to understand or make sense of new learning."

Can you tell me what they write about? Do they write personal stories or fiction?

"They brainstorm about what they know and what they want to know. We add to this list periodically. I encourage them to add from things that happen to them--we write on personal events at least once during the year. They also get ideas from what they read and from poems and stories I read to them. Yes, I insist they write on their personal life. Once they see that others are interested, they want to do more. Most say it's easier than fiction. They know more about their own life. Dana likes to write fiction though."

Do most students go through most stages for most stories?

"Some kids have real trouble finishing a story unless I impose deadlines. They like to share but don't complete all stories. If they are going to publish I insist they revise--for example a second draft."

APPENDIX C

EXAMPLE OF OBSERVATIONAL FIELDNOTES

REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLE OF OBSERVATIONAL FIELD NOTES

Journal entry March 28, 1988

Dana and Craig seem quite happy today. They have had some minor disagreements but nothing they haven't been able to sort out with Dana's humor and patience. Craig still wants to talk about boy/girl relations, but Dana isn't interested. They are just now beginning to start writing the story after 4 weeks of planning. The girls have worked hard at getting every detail sorted out before beginning the actual writing. I am surprised that both groups have done such extensive planning. Is it due to the relationship, the time, the lack of restrictions?

Journal entry February 10, 1988

The stories seem to be coming together and the groups seem to be working things out--each in their own way through. Dana is unusually quiet. Craig is forceful. Erica is her quiet, thoughtful self and Sharon her bubbly self. They are so interested in talking--will they get to the writing stage? How much of prewriting is prewriting? Craig has taken real ownership. He's very concerned about numbering all the tapes and taking care of the equipment. I am concerned with the fact that only one transcribes in the partner-

ship.I must ask the students what they think about this.

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLE OF AUDIOTAPED ORAL LANGUAGE WHILE WRITING

EXAMPLE OF AUDIOTAPED ORAL LANGUAGE

WHILE WRITING

S: I had an idea - like you know she - the wife - hit him on the head with the wine bottle and she gets a wine stain on her dress. She has to take it to the drycleaners and then she came back--I don't know--she has to wear a different dress because of the wine stain. If he goes to the drycleaner...

E: That would be kind of obvious but how could we make it so it's a dinner party and she has to wear the dress or you could have it they never saw the dress again.

S: She goes to get her husband who is in the painthouse at the dinner party like--and--no...

E: go on, go on...

S: She gets wine on the dress 'cause she hits him on the head with the wine bottle and then she has an identical dress and she changes before the company comes.

E: No, I know, before she goes to get her husband for supper she spills catsup on the dress and when she gets...

S: NO, NO,NO--it--catsup stains so she gets a spot on

her dress and everybody knows that and she doesn't want to go change and when she goes to him, she bops him on the head and gets on the top and then she changes into the identical dress but no catsup on it!

LONG PAUSE

E: Yaaaa! but how?

S: We got everything now!

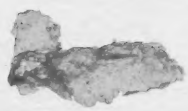
E: I have two questions though. How is she going to frame the maid and why does she want to kill her husband in the first place?

S: I don't know.

E: But we have to know--or it won't make sense to us or to anybody else.

APPENDIX E

EXAMPLE OF FORMAL INTERVIEW AND INFORMAL DISCUSSION



FINAL INTERVIEW WITH ERICA

(R: indicates the researcher)

R: Where did you get your ideas for the Wellington story?

E: I don't know. I think we knew we were going to write a murder mystery - we didn't know like how to write it and how they get caught and everything--it came from--'cause we spent a lot of time wondering what we were going to do and they I told Cheryl some ideas I saw on TV and then Sharon thought of this idea with the dress--at first we were going to use catsup instead of cranberry sauce and then we thought well catsup isn't that...

R: Did it come from "Murder She Wrote"?

E: "Matlock"

R: Who do you think your audience is when you write--who are you writing for?

E: I don't know--I'm just--I don't understand what you mean?

R: Do you have a purpose when you write?

E: Well I don't know I like the ideas and I like what I read and hear.

R: Do you ever write on your own?

E: Ya sometimes like this year I went to the library once and I got the books that don't have any words in them just pictures--I took one of those books and wrote a story with those pictures--just for fun!

R: Which of the pieces you wrote together did you like best?

E: The wellington one -we worked a long time--the ending I didn't like 'cause we had to rush it 'cause we both wanted to finish it.

R: Do you get more writing done alone or in partnership?

E: Alone--well it depends--like if I already have an idea in my head then I can write alone faster but if I don't it's probably faster if I partnership because if the other person has ideas then I might get ideas from that.

R: Are you usually stuck for ideas?

E: Ya... Once I'm going it's easy for me. (cheerfully)

R: What about where you disagreed? Were you arguing about the ideas or about each other? Were you really mad at each other or just about the story?

E: Both, we got mad about the story so we're mad at each other.

R: Did the partnership affect your friendship?

E: Mmmm... not really. We were arguing about ideas--like we weren't calling each other names just to be nasty--what happened like--on one of the stories like the second draft of the Wellington story, uhn like we had like one sentence, "Mrs. Wellington walked into the kitchen and dropped two packages on the dining room table." Sharon liked that but I thought, well, we should put "set" instead of "drop".We were arguing about that for the whole time and we dragged Dana and Craig into it. After we decided the second draft of the Wellington story--Uh, I think it was about the last day of writing I told Sharon I liked "dropped" better--you know I found that like in the middle of--half way between the arguing--I thought well, "dropped" does sound a little better--but I wouldn't give in 'cause I wouldn't give in cause I'vev always wanted to get my way--so I wouldn't give in--and Sharon yells loud. Sometimes Sharon won 'cause she yelled.

R: You were pretty firm. You didn't give in. Sharon told me that when you write you're very careful about getting everything right as you go along--she said you're very good at punctuation and spelling. When you write, do you try to get everything right at first?

E: Well depends--usually I just like write it down and

punctuation--well I usually do punctuation, but after that I go over it and ...

R: What about spelling? She said you think about it and you want to get it right before you get it down. She said you think about it all in your head first.

E: Well not really--maybe the sentence makes sense for something but not--that's probably--but not for spelling in my head--spelling I do after--I go back to something I noticed.

R: If you had a choice--I noticed you didn't write anything about your personal experiences--you wrote mostly fiction except the cat bylaw and the wills. What do you write if you have a choice ?

E: Well fiction but I might write nonfiction, a true story--like I'd change a verse, make some parts fiction to make it sound more interesting. Well, actually I wrote two this year--the first one was the one that we had to do before--like we had to write something that happened to us and I wrote about the day I got my tooth pulled and I sort of changed it a little--'cause it was on a school day and I changed it to a Saturday and then another story I wrote--like we had to write--like we went outside--we made kites and we went outside and flew them and afterwards we came inside and we wrote about like how it was and my

string got away and got caught in Sharon's kite and there was a BIG KNOT IN IT and then we were arguing and laughing like we were yelling at each other in the science room trying to get this undone and then like I said, "You know Sharon, I don't want to cut mine" and she said, "You have to, and I'm not cutting mine" and so then Mrs. W___ came and she cut both of our strings and so Sharon and I got new kite strings and then that was one of the stories I wrote.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH DANA

R: How's it going Dana?

D: Well I haven't given up on the Ferris Bueller story. I wrote a second draft in spring break and all I have to do is find the spelling mistakes.

R: Why don't you conference with Mrs. Wilson on that one just for a change.

D: OK, so I'll keep that in mind.--(he writes "confrins" with W___ and laughs.

R: You did that in the break? Did you do it of your own accord--you wanted to?

D: Ya, I changed some things and added some things.

R: And had you guys done that one together?

D: Yes.

R: And now what's happening?

D: Now I'm writing a story called "Edmonton Alert." Have you ever read any of Eric Wilson's books?

R: Yes, I have--uhm--"Kootenay Kidnapper".

D: You're the first person... you know about him!

R: There's a whole list of them. Have you got them all?

D: Not all but I've read a couple of them like "Disneyland Hostage", all those kinds of books. I should show you one cause I'm reading one right now.I love his books.

R: Where do you get them? Do you buy them or at the library?

D: I bought them. I bought them.

R: Which ones have you got?

D: UHM..."Murder on the Canadian", uh I'm reading "Vancouver Nightmare" uh "Vampires of Ottawa" oh and "Disneyland Hostage", "Spirit uh Spirit in the Rainforest".

R: Is that it?

D: There's more I think--at the public library and I want to take them out.

R: Maybe I can lend you some more. I have most of his. They're really good. I would like to interview him. We had to interview an author and one of the people-- Have you read Monica Hugh's books?

D: Ah ya, I'm reading one right now uh "Space Trap".I'd like to talk to him. Anyway you asked me if I've ever read any of Eric Wilson--well I'm trying to write in his style cause I like the style he writes. Tom's

heart was pounding harder and harder--Well see I sort of cheated--I used Tom, Liz and Ditmar except I changed Tom's last name to Houston instead of Austin and I didn't make Liz and Tom related. I like Tom Austin.

R: So when you said you're trying to write in the same style, have you read enough of the style that it's inside of you and it just comes out?

D: Oh ya I've read about four five or six.

R: Do you just hear it inside yourself?

D: Mostly I hear--A man was approaching with a pistol. Tom's heart stopped. The man was about to shoot the gun.

R: It just comes to you?

D: Ya!

R: When you write who's voice do you hear?

D: Oh a deep voice--a very deep voice--kinda like mine but not mine--kind of like a real author speaking to me except he agrees with me (laughs).

R: You amaze me Dana--you get so excited about Eric Wilson don't you?

D: Ha, what a way to go. I love him!

APPENDIX F

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT'S WRITTEN TEXTS

WRITTEN TEXT - PLANNING PAGE FOR
BOYS' STORY CALLED
"SPIES AT WORK"

Due to the difficulty in reading the boys' text it is reproduced below.

Name Page

Normal (Girl) - Callie
murder - Joe code name, Iceman
The won who gets killed - caorl
Heros (Boy) - Dana Pederson
Walter McKay.
Mom and Dad - Mrs. and Mr.
Pederson.
2 Boys - Art, Bill
2 Girls - Linda, colloen.

Joinor Novil

Craig + Dana
happen at fair
kill right on spot
week lalder Heros
come into case.
carol likes investag-
ting. Callie likes
itto.

Walter and David are
intareted in music
and favoirte singer is
gawin. it takes place in
Edmonton. At thje end of
story juge give the mar-
erer 20 years. callie wants
to join the Boys investa-
gate. callie favoite music
is tiffany

WRITTEN TEXT - GIRLS' FIRST DRAFT

OF THE WELLINGTON STORY

WRITTEN COOPERATIVELY

Day 3 February 3rd

"Hi I'm home! Evette have you started dinner yet?" called Margret Wellington from down hall. "Yes Mrs. Wellington, Dinner will be served shortly," replied Evette. Mrs Wellington walked into the kitchen and dropped two packages on the dinning room table. "The guests should be arriving soon. I'll go put my new dress on my bed for the upstairs maid to iron and then take these paints to my husband," said Mrs. Wellington and went upstairs Later that evening, Mrs. Wellington came downstairs to help Evette with dinner. Just then Mr Wellington came downstairs. "I'll be out in the paint house while you girls fix up dinner," he said and left.

Day 4 February 5th

Mrs Wellington placed a bowl of cranberry sauce on the dinning room table. Then she leaned over the bowl of cranberry sauce and put a candle on the centre of the dinning room table "There," she said with a sigh.

Day 5 February 8th

Just then the doorbell rang. "Evette, could you get the door please?" asked Mrs Wellington. Evette went to answer the door. "Good evening Miss Murphy," said Evette. "May I take your coat?"

Day 6 February 9th

Miss Murphy handed Evette her coat and went into the lounge

Story (1) Page (2)

Day 7 February 10th

After everybody arived they all sat down for dinner. "Cheers to Mrs Wellington for having this party," said Mrs Murphy in a loud voice. Then they all lifted their glasses and clinked them together. "I'll go get my husband for dinner," said Mrs Wellington and left. A few minutes later, Mrs Wellington came back into the dinning room. "My husband will be coming shortly" she said as Evette started carving the turkey. After about ten minutes had passed Mrs. Wellington asked Evette to go see where her husband was.

Day 8 February 15th

Evette left the dinning room and went to the paint house. There was a moment of silence and then Mrs Murphy spoke. "The strangest thing happened to me yesterday" she said "I..." "Ahhhhhh" Mrs. Murphy was interupted loud scream. Mrs. ~~Murphy~~ Wellingth dropped her fork.

Day 9 February 16th

"It's coming from the paint house," said Mr. MGregor. They all rushed out to the paint house and saw Evette shaking with a knife in her hand. Mrs. Wellington gasped and walked into the paint house. She saw her husband lying dead on the floor. "Evette, she screamed.

Story (1) Page (3) ...more-

Day 10 February 17th

"How could you?" Mrs. Vandenburg walked into the room looked at the body and fainted. "Somebody call the police," said Hunt Mrs. Wellington started to cry. Mr. Mgregor called the police. About 5 minutes later the arrived. "We were in the, the neighbourhood," they said "Now what happened?" Mrs. Wellington explained the whole thing. "Then we walked in and saw her," she said pointing to Evette. "Standi there with a knife in her hand. She did it officer I know she did."

Day 11 February 18th (At home)

"Why don't you go into the house and rest while we look around and take the body away, said police officer. Mrs. Wellington went into the lounge with the other guests. "It's all right Margret It had to happen sooner or later, being a famous painter and all," said Mrs. Murphy. "He was such a kind husband to me," said Mrs. Wellington and then started to cry. Meanwhile in the paint house officer McCarther was searching around the floor when he spotted a loose floorboard.

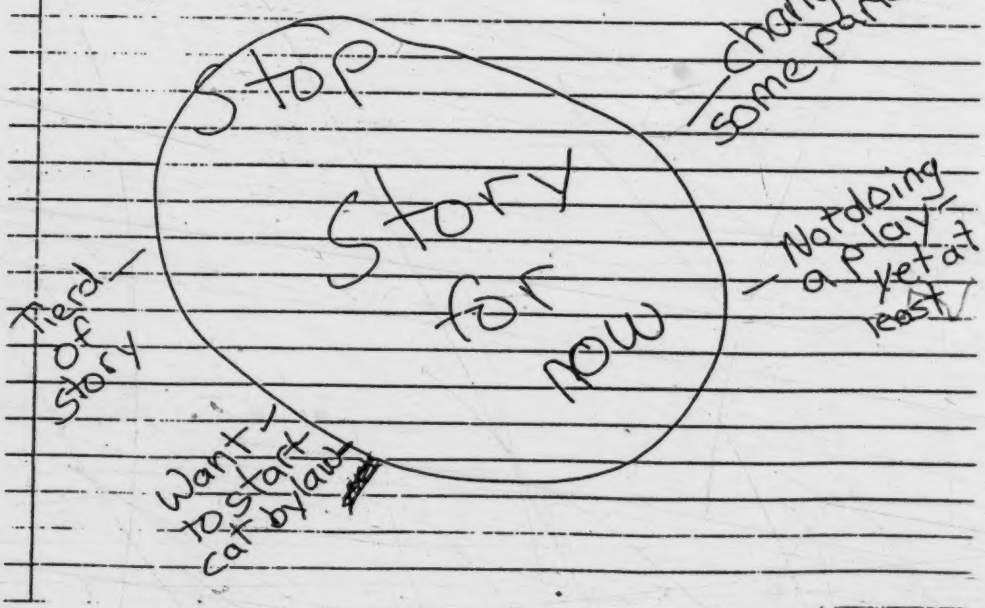
Day 12 February 22nd

He pulled back the floorboard and saw a white dress with a red wine stain on it. "HMM" he said. Then he put on a pair of rubber gloves, picked up the dress and placed it in a plastic bag.

Story (1) Page (4)

Then he looked again

Then he looked closer into the hole and saw the top of a broken wine bottle. He picked up the wine bottle and put it into a plastic bag. The he walked over to where Mr. Wellington was lying and picked up the knife that Evette dropped and went into the lounge. "I'll have to take finger prints," said officer mcarther and pulled out a stamp pad in front of Mrs. Wellington. "Are you acusing me of killing my own husband? Why would I kill him?" asked Mrs. Welington. ~~"Every Every one in~~ "You might kill him ~~in~~ for his money and besides everyone in the room is a suspect said officer Mcarther. "Why didn't I wait until he died?" asked Mrs. Wellington



WRITTEN TEXT - PLANNING PAGE FOR

FOR GIRLS' CAT STORY

will finish - stopped it

Day 20 March 22nd

Names of characters

1. Freeway - Wally - Alley cat on the freeway
2. Miss Mew - Rich cat
3. Fluffy - Plain cat - house cat
4. Mitsy - in beetween Miss Mew and Fluffy
5. ~~Tramp - Alley cat~~ Fang - Alley Cat.

6. ~~Jimmy - little boy~~ 6 - Jimmy - little boy
7. ~~Kate - Jimmy's mom~~
8. ~~Bill - Jimmy's dad~~

Personalaty's of Characters

1. Freeway - got his name because he kept walking on the freeway and geting run over so he has a limp - his real name is Wally. He is a fat and lazy cat He is an alley cat

2. Miss Mew - a rich spoiled cat that lives next door to Fluffy and Mitsy. She lives in a large house and talks in a rich voice.

3. Fluffy - A plain house cat that lives next door to Miss Mew With a family of 5

4. Mitsy - ~~Mitsy~~ Like fluffy except with a family of 3

5. Fang - a black alley cat that shows his fang. He is a half skinny and half fat cat

ORAL DEBATE AND WRITTEN TEXT WHICH RESULTED IN THE CAT BYLAW

ORAL DEBATE--A DAYCARE FOR CATS

S Want to do a debate?

E Yes, then we each get to have our own opinion.

S What's yours about?

E My what?

S Your issue you want to debate. I want to do the cat bylaw. OK?

E OK, I'll just put "Cat Bylaw" on the top of the page.

S OK, if I was in charge of the world I'd change the cat bylaw.

E Do you want to do this one--together? I don't have a cat--you do, so it makes a difference doesn't it?

S Cats should be able to walk around!

E And I'm going to write against that! Cats go to the bathroom everywhere and...

S Good, we disagree then--we agree on that. (laughter)

E And it smells! Write on top of the page Cat Bylaw again.

S Why?

E Because we're going to do it together--we'll put my opinions and your opinions so we know who's is

what.

E Sharon I want to ask you a question. If you don't have a cat, would you still not like the rule--as much? I still think it's dumb.

E Ya but you wouldn't like it as much like it wouldn't be ... Even if you had a cat would you still hate it--more?

S No--exactly the same.

E What! I'm writing against you right?

S Well cat's--I agree that cats do that--go to the bathroom I mean. Look I shortened it to CDT--cats do that--it's my initials.(laughter)

E I agree in a way (Erica writes this down slowly)

S Don't write this next part down till I figure it out.

E But dogs--dogs do that too (still writes slowly--thinking, pausing) dogs do poop on our lawn.

S Dogs usually have their owners with them.

E Not always. Some people let their dogs out 'cause we've had a lot of...

S Ya but dogs don't come back.

E Yes they do.

S No but cats always do--in the same place.

E Well it depends on how far they go. And dogs--like the bylaws are different for dogs. Cats have a worse bylaw--They can't even do it out of their

yards now. Cat's do have rights you know--out of their yard.

S Without getting paid (I think she means fined $200).

pause

E Ya they do have a right to go out of their yard.

S I agree, but you know...

E OK I agree the way that dogs do that but dogs do that too 'cause they do.

S What?

E And also (writes "and also")

S Don't write it yet--there's something here about...

E Also because dogs--no cats--can't go out of their yard.

S You gotta carry--if they do they have to be on a leash.

E Cats are hard to train--(writes "hard to train"). They won't walk on a leash.

S Hmm, hmmm.

E What did you think of the newsletter?

S The "Hi and Lois" one of Heather's? I've seen it before. She just copied the ideas from the paper.

E What are we talking about this for? Ok dogs are hard to train--no I mean cats. (laughter, Erica writes down, "I agree that cats have a right

to...")

S To leave the yard with their owner and the leash? Uh--Erica that means every time your cat wants to go outside, you have to go with it?

E Ya

S You could be baking and your cat wants to go outside--fine, just let the cat out--just in the yard I mean. You can't tend to your cat every single minute.

E That's right you can't.

S So how come you let your-- umm--OK.

E OK then in the yard with their owners without a leash.

S We can't keep our cat in the yard. She can jump over the fence.

E She could also crawl under it.

long pause

E Well still--I mean...

S Then how can we let him out in the yard if we go with him and she's still going to do all these things and we're going to try and stop her?

E Sharon, listen--uhm--I want to tell you something, like you said--you said uhm-- what did you say? You said that--uhm--some cats don't come back all the time and if you let them go outside

then you'll lose your cat.

S No we let our cat go outside.

E Ya--so? Well then that's not fair to cats who do (voice is very urgent now and loud--then she adds softly)... come back.

S Well life isn't always fair you know. Anyway my cat's not gonna know about this bylaw is it? So of course she's gonna leave the yard which means we'd have to give her to a farm.

long pause

E So maybe cats and dogs aren't right for the city. They are except for the dumb bylaw now they put in.

E I agree cats pee all over the place and it smells--it really smells.

S But what are we going to do about it? If we give this dumb cat law--you know cats have feelings too. How would you like it if you couldn't leave your yard for the rest of your life--you wouldn't!

E That's different bec...

S No it's not!

E Yes it is Sharon. Cat's are little furry creature and they think you're a tall hairy person. Well we're not hairy, but we're big, tall and funny-looking people. We know our way around more than cats do.

laughter

S OK so how far should cats be allowed to go?

E I don't know how far cats go!

S Just listen--If you go for a walk, say five hundred miles--that's as far as cats can find where you are--and they can find its way back.

E I think cats should just stay on their block.

S How we gonna make them do that?

The girls continue to talk about possible ways to restrain cats. They realize that there is not an easy solution to the problem of the cat bylaw.

S How we gonna keep them in yards? And this bylaw--all they can do is everyone's going to have to get rid of their cat! There'll be no cats anymore, unless you have them on a leash. And some people may love these cats, and they have to give them up?

E No. they don't care if the cats have feelings!

S Who?

E The bylaw people.

long pause

E I don't know uhm...

S Then how can we stop them--they can't be right!

At this point the two girls make up a joke that is

inaudible and laughter is heard on the tape recorder.

E Well how are we going to stop cats from doing that?

S We cant'--The bylaw will but then they'd have to go to a farm. We managed to slip by without this stupid law so why have it now?

long pause with many sighs heard

E I don't know--I agree both ways.

S I disagree one way--partly. The only part I agree is that cats pee all over the place--and the bylaw? Dogs have a bylaw!

S How do you like the bylaw? Have you read the bylaw?

E No

S Well you know what? If they find your cat walking around not in your yard, they say that'll be $500. or something--and then they take your cat and you pay $200. to get the cat back plus all the damages.

E What damages--to cats?

S No the damages they say the cats do like scratching trees and stuff. They can say that--that way they get more money--the government--so they can just simply lie.

E Dogs go to the bathroom all over the place.

S And they don't get fined. They say they've got a bylaw--ha--could have fooded me!

S We should take this to the city hall. I hope they have a debate. If they have it on TV I'm watching it right--'cause I love my cat and I won't be able to keep her if we have the bylaw.

E I think, well this is kind of stupid Sharon-really stupid...

S Tell me.

E What if there's a place where cats can go--an area or something.

S How they going to keep them in there? If there was this place it would be the sleaziest place around--a waste of land.

E I know a daycare for cats!

S Sick. They can't keep them in.

E Oh sick ya!

S Well I hate the bylaw anyway. We've passed this time away--like all these years without the bylaw so why not now?

WRITTEN TEXT - CAT BYLAW

ay 13 Feb 29 Cat Bylaw story (2) Page (1)

ies because they go to the bathroom by trees, park, ect and it smells.

~~The person~~ I agree in a way but dogs do that too. And also cats are hard to train on a leash.

(E) I agree that cats have a right to leave the yard with their owners without a leash but they should be able to roam around free for awile

(Name) - Suggested idea
Name - helped a bit

Day 14 March 1st Cat law

Disagree - We think that cats should have a right to roam around freely and not have their owners pay for it. We also think that the fines are too high. Cats have feelings too. If cats have that law then dogs should too

Agree - They do pee all over the place

Other Sugestions -

Cheryl Erin If you see a cat peeing on your lawn or somthing take to it's owner and ask for $10.

Erin Have a special time that you can let you cat out - three ~~to~~ five times a day ~~s~~.

Cheryl shoten fines

WRITTEN TEXT - DANA

WRITTEN INDEPENDENTLY

DRAFT THREE AS TYPED BY HIS MOTHER

"EDMONTON ALERT"

EDMONTON ALERT

CHAPTER I

It all started out a normal day for Tom Houston. He was at a new school in Edmonton, with his friend Dietmar. You see Tom was no ordinary boy he was a detective and good one at that. At lunch Tom was talking to Dietmar "Wouldn't it be great if we had an adventure," Tom said excitedly. No Dietmar said quickly. Then suddenly the lights went out and Tom's hands were getting sweaty and his heart pumped harder and like a flash the lights went back on. "Wow!" Dietmar said with his mouth, "open you were right it would be great if that adventure happened". "Save it," Tom said sternly, "lets go ask the janitor what happened. Hi Sir, I'm Tom Houston and I was just wondering how the blackout occurred?" "Sorry young man, I don't know, now run along."

CHAPTER II

"It was very strange how the janitor acted this morning, maybe he did it" Tom said quietly to himself. Then Dietmar came around the corner smiling, "hey Houston," he said, "you got a date for Saturday? It'll be boring. I'm never boring then he left." The cool breeze brushed Tom's hair as he walked home, Tom was thinking about the case but as he walked past the TV store a message was on the big screen and half of the little ones . . . . I AM THE NIGHTMARE . . .

CHAPTER III

Tom's heart stopped for about three seconds the man's face was horrish. "EDMONTON BEWARE YOUR CITY IS IN DOOM UNLESS YOU GIVE ME THE BOYS TOM HOUSTIN AND DIETMAR JONES". Then the TV blew to shreads. Suddenly Tom and Dietmar were swooped into the air by a helicopter. Everything was black until a man with a lighter said "Move and Die". Tom examined the man and saw a pistol. Tom thought that this could be the end.

CHAPTER IV

They travelled for about three hours. Then stopped at a cave and it was even darker than the helicopter. When they got out Dietmar said to Tom quietly, "psst Tom, you see the exit? When I say now head for it. "Dietmar are you out of your mind? We're stuck here miles from Edmonton and you want to take chances that could get us killed." Then Tom took a deep breath and followed the dark mysterious man. Then finally they came to a place which was filled with gold, silver, copper, and money. Then Tom's eyes caught the nightmare, he had a scar located by his right eye and looked like a monster who wanted to kill them at any moment.

CHAPTER V

"OK you kids, sit here - the boss will see you. "You mean Bruce Springsteen?" Dietmar said. "Shut-up kid or you're first." Then suddenly a man about 6 to 6 1/2 feet tall walked in, he had a scare on his forehead. The blackest hair you ever seen and a dark leather jacket with pearls all over it. "Why do you need us here?" Tom said scared. "You, Tom, whatever your name is come here. You see these? In his hand was drugs. "You know why I asked you here Tom? Why sir, you took my brother to jail and all he left me were these, that's why I am going to kill you."

CHAPTER VI

Tom was in shock. He never breathed for a long time. Then Dietmar said "uh excuse me are you going to kill me? "Maybe," Nightmare replied. They were thrown into a cell full of dust. Tom shivered all over. Then suddenly a tarantula crawlled up Tom's pant leg. Then he started shaking his leg visously. The tarantula fell out and Dietmar stepped on it. It made a squish noise. Then Tom saw out of the corner of his eye a way out, but only one at a time.

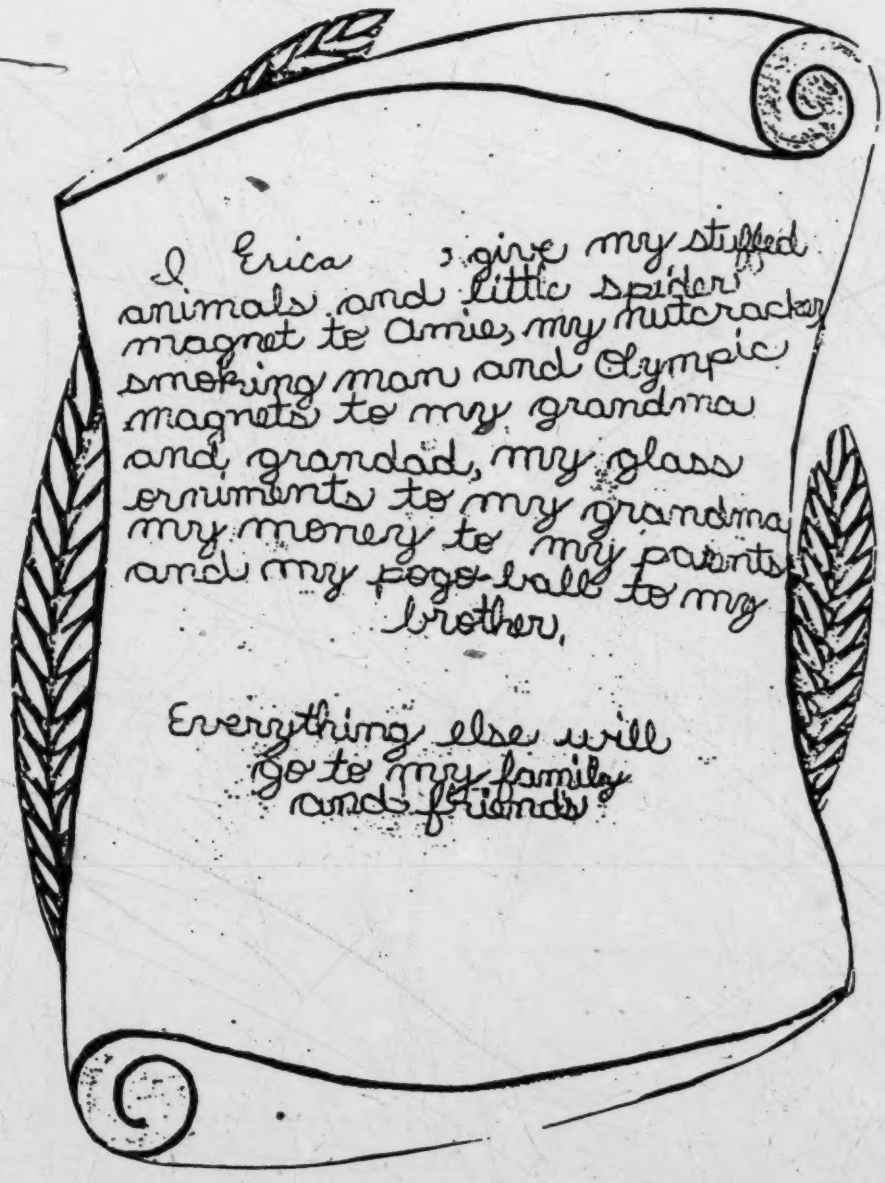
CHAPTER VII

"You first Dietmar". "No way," Dietmar replied. "No you NOW Dietmar." So with a puzzled look Dietmar slithered through. "You next Tom". Before Tom could go through he saw the Nightmare with a machine gun. "It's too good to be true, your dead now." Shots came blasting out one after another directed at Tom. A scream from Tom's lips crossed the room. "Nooo it's not true," Tom said weakend, tell the authorities". Dietmar ran and ran till he came to a gas station. Out of breath Dietmar said, "excuse me sir call the police I just witnessed a murder." After a few minutes the police came and picked up Dietmar and he directed them to the cave. They captured the gang. Then an ambulance came with a stretcher and picked up Tom, but before they could, Dietmar said "can you fix him up?" "We'll see," the driver said. A few weeks later Dietmar went to the hospital, but before Dietmar could walk into Tom's room, Tom walked out smiling but still in much much pain. "Hey pal we did it!"

* * * * * *

WRITTEN TEXT - PUBLISHED COPY OF

ERICA'S "WILL"


I Erica , give my stuffed animals and little spider magnet to Amies, my nutcracker smoking man and Olympic magnets to my grandma and grandad, my glass ornaments to my grandma my money to my parents and my pogo-ball to my brother.
Everything else will go to my family and friends